

PC

ZONE

£4.99/October 1996 ISSUE 43

The Pandora Directive

Access re-open the Tex-Files

Links LS

Is it better than PGA?

Bedlam

Robots on the rampage

Gene Wars

Bullfrog's kitsch C&C clone

**RETRO
GAMES**
WERE THEY REALLY
THAT GOOD?
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**CASH
OFF
QUAKE!**
see page 104

EXCLUSIVE!!!

Yes it hurts... Yes it works...

SYNDICATE WARS

*Your CD is missing!
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ORGASMIC!

NEW GAME OFFER

See page 118



**QUAKE
EXCLUSIVE!**
16 PAGE REVIEW OF
THE **FULL** GAME!



QU



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19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ

Tel: 0171-631 1433

Fax: 0171-436 1321

CompuServe: 100142, 2152

CIX: PCZONE@CIX.compulink.co.uk

Editor John Davison

Art Editor Wag

Deputy Editor Jeremy Wells

Production Editor Thea Marcuard

Features Editor Chris Anderson

Disk Editors Daniel Emery

Reader Services Miles Tudor

Contributors Spike, (Design); Amaya Lopez, Nudge, Abby Hoffmann (Production); Charlie Brooker; Marcus Bullen; Richard Cleves; Colin Culk; Duncan MacDonald; David Mathieson; David McCandless; Patrick McCarthy; Andrew Mitchell; Gareth Ramsay; Paul Rigby; Duncan Swain

Publisher Tim Ponting

Subscriptions Hotline 01454 620070

Back Issues 01789 490215

Advertising Manager Mike Shepherd
0171-917 3873

Senior Sales Executive Andrew Caddy 0171-917 3931

Group Advertising Manager Alan Gonsalves

Advertising Production Colin Robinson

Group Production Manager Simon Maggs

Origination Colour-Tech 0171-729 3934

Printed in England by ET Heron

Newstrade Manager James Burnay

Distribution SM Magazine Distribution 0181-677 8111

Mail Order Executive Sarah Burton

Publishing Director Bruce Sawford

Circulation Director Sean Farmer

Marketing Director Alison Townsend

Non-Executive Director Dick Pountain

Financial Director Ian Leggett

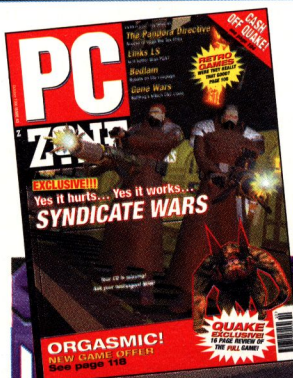
Managing Director Alistair Ramsay

Chairman Felix Dennis

PC Zone is the UK's best-selling
PC games magazine: ABC 43,149

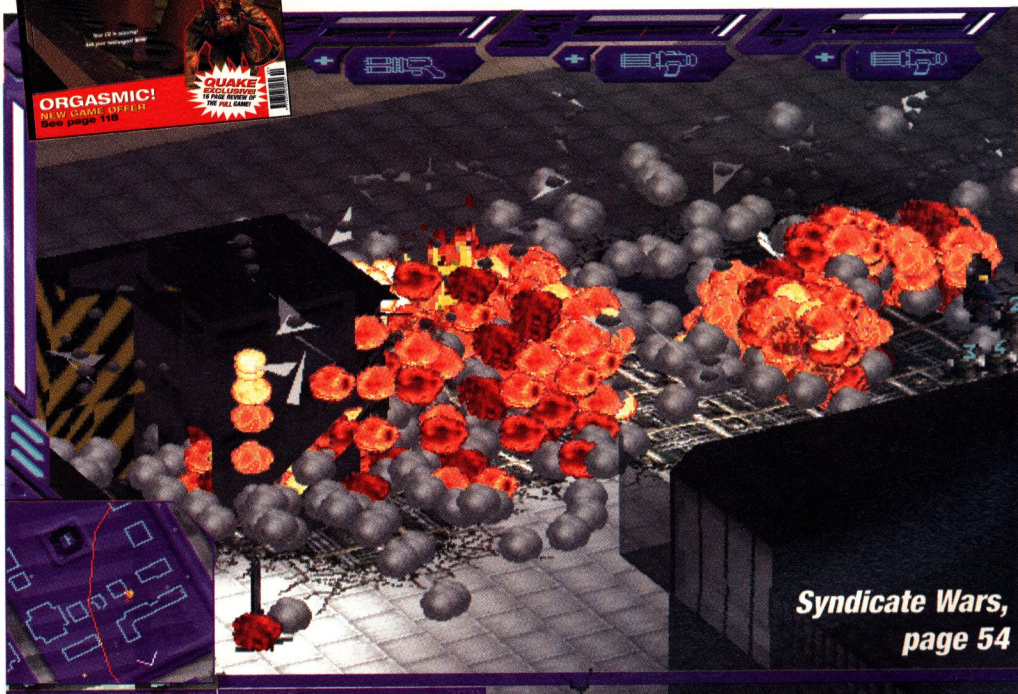


PC Zone is published monthly by Dennis Publishing Ltd. Company registered in England, number 1138891.
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SYNDICATE WARS

Bullfrog's masterpiece returns with vastly enhanced graphics and an even more involving story. Is this action/strategy at its very finest? Page 54



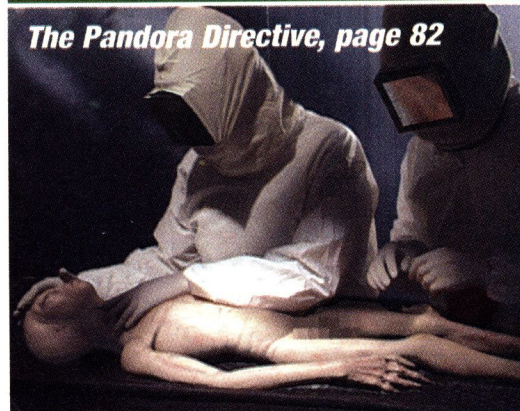
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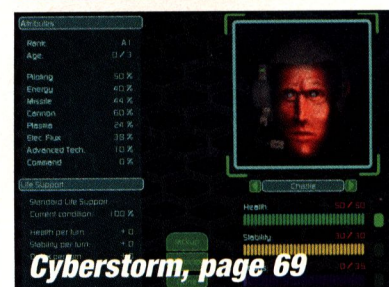
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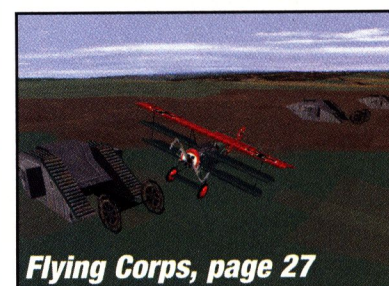
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COVER DISKS

CD ZONE



Help!

The CD not working? HD playing up? The PC's being a total bast? Don't worry – phone our helpline and sort yourself out pronto!

HD DISK HELP

Phone Matthew on 01274 736990
Any week day between 9am and 4pm

CD-ROM HELP

Phone ABT on 01708 250250
Any week day between 9.30am and 5pm
(Please DO NOT phone the PC Zone office as your calls will NOT be answered)

If you are calling either help line, then please take note of the following points:

- If possible have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- If this is not possible, note down as much relevant information as possible ie system type, sound card, RAM etc, plus the nature of the fault.
- Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.

No CD?

If you are unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclose your HD(s) from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to:

CD Exchange (PC243), Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ

Your details (please print clearly)

Name:

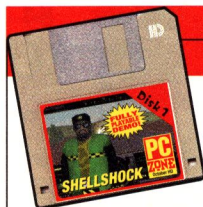
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Please make cheques payable to:

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CDs from previous issues are also available.



HD DISKS

To install this month's brilliant playable *Shellshock* demo, insert disk 1 into your floppy drive, switch to your 'A:' drive and type 'INSTALL'. Follow the instructions on screen and away you go. If you're a Windows 95 user, quit out into DOS mode (via the START/Restart the computer in MS-DOS mode facility) and follow the above instructions.

Shellshock (Core Design)

Calling all floppy citizens... This month we bring you *Shellshock*, the tank game with 'attitude'. Featuring a bizarre cast of trendy young things and an arsenal of tanks, it's a non-stop ride of blasting action as you wage war



through the streets like a maniac.

This demo version is a huge single level – the full version features another 24 for your entertainment. To succeed, you'll need to rescue all the hostages on the level – the compass at the top of the screen will point you in the right direction. When you get near a hostage, slow down and they'll leap in the tank. Rescue them all, and the compass will point in the direction of the exit. Okay? Good.

Specifications: 486DX/66, 8Mb

Controls:

Tank control Q A
Tactical map Tab
Fire weapon Space
Select weapon S
Turret left J
Turret right L

Turret centre K
Change target T

Hold both Q and A to execute a faster turn.
Use keys 1-4 to select weapons instantly.

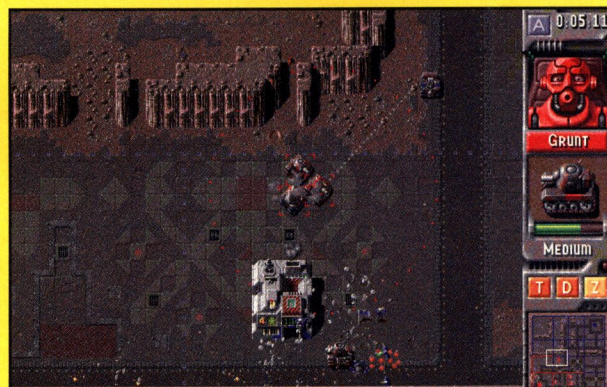


CD-ROM

To access the veritable plethora of orgasmic playable demos on this *PC Zone* cover CD change to your CD-ROM drive letter and type <PCZONE>. The menu is easy to use and simply clicking on the icon of the demo you want to run with the left mouse button will launch the installer for it automatically. Just follow the on-screen instructions.

Z (Time Warner)

Fancy some do ya? Eh? Eh? What are you waiting for then? Come and have a go at this playable demo of the Bitmap Brothers' lightning-fast strategy game if you think you're hard enough. The gameplay should be familiar to anyone who's played Westwood's *Command & Conquer* – except that Z is faster, trickier, and a lot more strategic. The basic idea is to attack the enemy's fortress while simultaneously protecting your own. What's that you say? It sounds easy? Oh dear. You poor deluded fool, you...



Specifications: 486DX/66, 8Mb, SVGA

Controls:

Left mouse Main control button
Right mouse Direct mouse scroll
Centre mouse Toggle selected unit
Spacebar Toggle selected unit
(If you are placing a gun, the spacebar will scroll to the factory which manufactured it)

F1 Cycle through your available robot units
F2 Cycle through your available vehicles
F3 Cycle through your available buildings
F4 Cycle through your available guns
F5 Cycle through your units which are under attack

Return
Delete
Shift

Scroll to your fort
Dissolve currently selected multi-group
Add or remove the unit which you click from a multi-group (Note: you can't scroll while holding down the shift key)
Select all the units on screen to form a multi-group
Bring up the game menu
Bring up the load menu
Bring up the save menu
Pause/unpause the game
Restart level
Quit game
Quit from the main menu to DOS

Shattered Steel (Interplay)

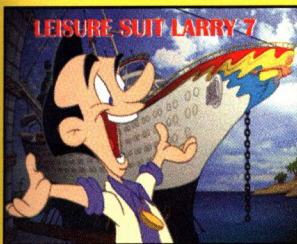
The first of this month's mech-on-mech combat games, and a World First to boot!!! It's all set in the year 2132 (come off it, no game featuring giant robots is going to be set in 1932 now, is it?). You're a mercenary personary working on behalf of a dodgy mining corporation. Your mission? To destroy the enemy of course, knucklehead. What's the matter, haven't you ever played a game before? Eh? Anyway, check out page 45 for a full run-down on what the final version should offer.

Specifications: 30Mb hard drive space, 8Mb, 486DX/66
Controls: Keyboard, mouse
Cursor keys Movement
Mouse buttons Fire



Leisure Suit Larry 7 (Sierra)

Ho ho ho ho ho. Ha ha ha ha ha. Hee hee hee hee hee. Snigger snigger snigger snigger. Arf arf arf. Oh, it's so funny. Har har har. Yuk yuk yuk yuk yuk. Be still my aching sides. Guffaw guffaw guffaw guffaw guffaw. Chortle chortle chortle chortle. This has to be the funniest thing we've ever seen. Really. Honestly. We're not lying or anything - it's really really funny. That Al Lowe - whadda guy! He really knows how to tell a joke. O ho ho ho ho ho.



Specifications: Windows 95, 8Mb
Controls: Mouse

Cyberstorm (Sierra)

Top robot-on-robot scraptastic action! This demo version sets up a mission which sees you controlling two bloody big metal Hercs (robot combat jobbies to you and I). If you fancy re-configuring the mechs before leaping into the fray, just choose the 'Bioderm' option from the main menu. As ever, the full release has tons more levels and features, including modem and network play modes. It's clobberin' time.

Specifications: Windows 95, 8Mb, SVGA

Controls: Mouse, joystick, keyboard

Note: This demo has a full on-line help facility. Simply tap the right mouse button for a full explanation of exactly what the Sam Hill is going on.

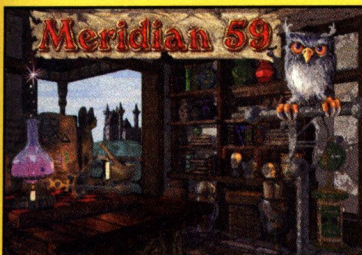


Meridian 59 (Studio 3DO)

Innovative on-line RPG-er from Studio 3DO. You'll need an Internet connection to play this one. Basically it's a graphical MUD (Multi User Dungeon) which sees you and a bunch of strangers wandering around

in a sort of D&D style environment. As with most of this month's selection of games, it's a Windows 95 release... so if you haven't got that yet, it's time to start thinking about it. All hail Bill Gates! All hail Bill Gates!!!

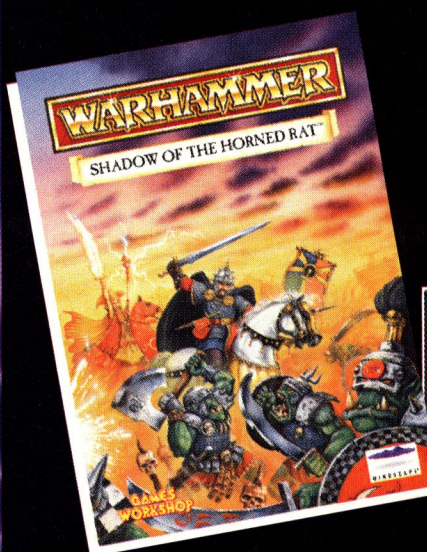
Specifications: Windows 95, 8Mb, SVGA
Controls: Mouse



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COMING SOON FOR PLAYSTATION

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Priority House, Charles Avenue,
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Surface Tension (Gametek)

Surface Tension is a 3D shoot 'em up which is a teeny bit reminiscent of *Rescue On Fractalus*, the old (and I mean OLD) LucasArts game. You play some kind of space hero type (you know the sort - square jaw, blue eyes, phenomenally large pork sword etc) who's flying hither and thither in a kind of hovercraft thing. It runs in DOS, by the way. Okey dokes?



Specifications: 486DX/66, 8Mb, SVGA

Controls:

Up/down Pitch

Left/right Roll

Ins/delete Yaw

A Accelerate

Z Decelerate

Tab Booster

Numeric keypad - Ascend

Numeric keypad + Descend

I Release probe (only while

landed on flat surfaces)

L Beam probe back to ship

(only while in range)

F Engage auto pilot

Weapon control:

Spacebar Fire phasers

Right shift Switch between

single phaser (high fire rate);

or double phaser (low fire rate)

Alt Locks on enemy (pilot

mode only); successive

presses will lock on next

enemy seen

Left Ctrl Fire missile

X Release anti-missile decoy

E Electro magnetic pulse

(EMP) bomb

C Cluster missile

N Detonate mine

WSpecEm - Spectrum Emulator for Windows



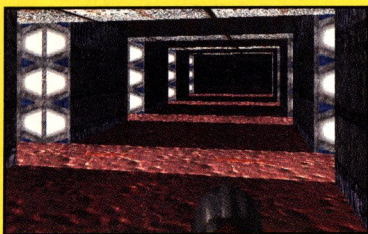
An utterly groovy ZX Spectrum emulator for Windows 3.1 or 95. You can even resize the screen and everything! Works just like the real thing - but this time around you can use a decent keyboard! Write programs in BASIC! Worship Clive Sinclair! Etc! Etc!

Specifications: Windows 3.1/95, 486DX/66, 8Mb, SVGA

Controls: Keyboard

Marathon 2 (Bungee)

Yes folks, it's *Doom*-a-like time again. *Marathon 2* is the sequel to a popular Macintosh-based first-person kill 'em up. Popular among Mac owners, that is. Some of them can even be found in newsgroups spouting on and on about how *Marathon* is better than *Quake*. The poor mad fools. Anyway, as clones go, it ain't bad. This demo version gives you three one-player levels and one multi-player level to blast your way through. Go git 'em, sparky!



Specifications: 486/66 or above, Win 95, 8Mb

Controls:

Movement Cursor keys

Sidestep left Z

Sidestep right X

Look up D

Look down C

Look ahead V

Glance left A or Q + left arrow

Glance right

Fire primary trigger

Fire secondary trigger

Previous weapon

Next weapon Page down

Sidestep modifier

Run/swim Caps lock

Look Q

Action Spacebar

AutoMap Tab

S or right arrow

Spacebar

Alt

Page up

Page down

W

Caps lock

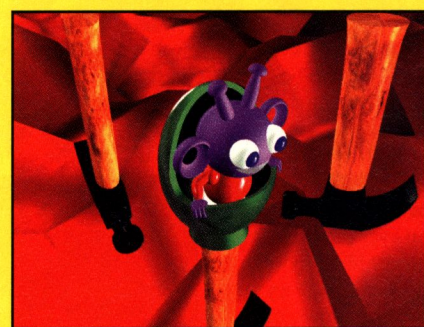
Q

Spacebar

Tab

Gubble (Shareware)

We love *Gubble* because it's completely off its tits - it makes no sense whatsoever. You take control of this weird alien-like thing that sits inside what appears to be an egg of some kind. The aim of the game is to find a hammer, screwdriver or similar



tool and then sit on top of it. Once suitably perched, you can travel around the maze prising out screws and the like. No, really. Anyway, it's 100 per cent old-school arcade-style fun. Give it a spin and you'll see what we're on about.

Specifications: Windows 95, 486DX/66, 8Mb

Controls:

Cursor keys Movement **Spacebar** Jump **F3** Start game

Note: *Gubble* requires the latest version of DirectX. Don't worry if you don't have it - the installation routine will take care of everything. Okay?

Firefight (Electronic Arts)

We've got two dedicated multi-player games on this month's CD. Here's the first one. It's called *FireFight*, it's a 3D space combat game, and it's from EA. This is the shareware version - the commercial release has, as you'd expect, loads more levels and weapons. And probably some free cake too.

Specifications: Windows 95, P60, 8Mb, 40Mb hard drive space available for Windows swap file, SVGA

Controls:

Action

Rotate

Accelerate

Decelerate

Reverse

Turbo

Turbo-lock

Strafe left/right

Keyboard

Left, right arrow

Up arrow

Release up arrow

Down arrow

Left

Caps lock

Alt + left, right arrow

or z/x



M1A2 Abrams (Interactive Magic)

How's this for a sneak preview? Interactive Magic have given us a pre-alpha demo version of their new Windows 95-based strategic tank sim. It's not finished yet, but this playable preview should give you some idea of what to expect from the final game. You've got one level to fight your way through, but the final release will have over 75. Check out the menu screens for a good look at the other tanks and vehicles that'll find their way into the end product.

Specifications: Windows 95 (with DirectX), 8Mb, P60 or above, SVGA

Controls: Mouse/keyboard (joystick recommended)

Check out the options screen for a full list of keyboard controls.

Empire II (US Gold)

Go way back in time to the Battle of Agincourt. Ever fancied playing a leading role in that? Well now you can. Weirdo.

Specifications: Windows 95, 486DX/66, 8Mb, SVGA **Controls:** Mouse

Chaos Overlords (US Gold)

A one-level demo of another new strategy game from US Gold. The level included here is called 'Kill 'Em All', which should give you some idea of what to expect. You're a Chaos Overlord, see. And there's loads of other Chaos Overlords too. And you've got to kill 'em all. Hence the name of the scenario. Anyway, you've got a year to achieve this goal - and each 'turn' takes a week. So you'd best put your thinking cap on. Especially since the 'Save' feature's been disabled in the demo...

Specifications: 486DX, Windows 95, SVGA **Controls:** Mouse

IndyCar 2 (Sierra)

The all-new Windows 95 version of Papyrus' classic racing game. There are two tracks for your perusal - Michigan and Detroit - and loads of other cars to race against. Or crash



into. Which is what usually happens (especially if you turn around and go round the track backwards, which you just won't be able to resist).

Specifications: Windows 95, 8Mb, SVGA, P60 or above

Controls: Joystick

Note: You may define your own keyboard controls by selecting 'Options' from the toolbar.

Albion (Blue Byte)

We haven't seen a game like this for quite a while. It's a top-down viewed adventure set in space with loads of characters to talk to and tons of rooms to explore. Apparently, male pattern baldness has been completely cured in the future, because there isn't a barren pate in sight. Cool.



Specifications: 486DX/66, 8Mb

Controls: Left mouse button Walk Right mouse button Use/examine Escape Quit

Warwind (Mindscape)

If it's resource management you want, it's resource management you'll get in this playable demo of this... er.. resource management game. Cool.

Specifications: Windows 3.1 or 95, 8Mb, 486DX **Controls:** Mouse

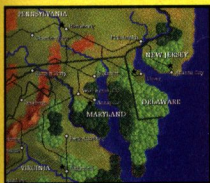
Super Ice Qube Hopper (Shareware)

The old-school thrills just keep on coming. *Super Ice Qube Hopper* is a kind of '90s 'homage' to one of the most surreal arcade games of all time, *Qbert*. Your aim is to 'mark' every single block on the screen by leaping onto it. Since 1) You can only move diagonally, and 2) There are loads of things trying to kill you, this isn't as easy as it sounds. Oddly enough, there's no keyboard option - we recommend that you use a joypad... you do have a joypad, don't you?

Specifications: Windows 95, 8Mb **Controls:** Mouse or joypad

American Civil War (Interactive Magic)

Recapture that *Gone With The Wind* ambience with this full-on wargame. According to the accompanying blurb, Terry Coleman of Computer Gaming World says that "It's the only strategic level Civil War game worth buying". And who are we to argue?



Specifications: Windows 95, 486DX/66, 8Mb, SVGA

Controls: Mouse

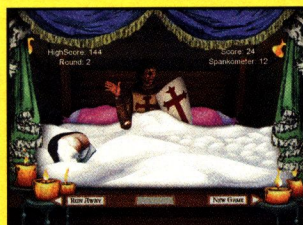
Note: Check out the 'README.TXT' file in the ACW directory for a full step-by-step tutorial in case you find yourself getting confused.

Monty Python (7th Level)

There's a triple bundle of Pythonesque hilarity on this month's CD...

Quest For The Holy Grail

A quick demo of 7th Level's laff-a-second interactive movie-cum-picture-book-type thing...



Desktop Pythoniser

Adorn Windows 95 with all manner of *Grail*-related icons, wallpaper and sound samples.

Secret To Intergalactic Success

A celebration marking the 25th anniversary of all things Python.

Specifications: Windows 95, 486DX/66, SVGA **Controls:** Mouse

Internet Utilities

What's Santa got in his sack for you? Oooh - lots of lovely Internet utilities, including a couple of HTML editors, a top-notch FTP program (Cute FTP), and some charming musical plug-ins for Netscape. There's loads more too. Check out the full menu from the Browser.

Essentials

We're spoiling you rotten with a veritable chocolate box full of ultra-handly gizmos and shareware applications for Windows, including the superb Paint Shop Pro, Winzip, and the McAfee Virus exterminator. Not to mention DirectX and Win32s. You lucky, lucky people. **Z**

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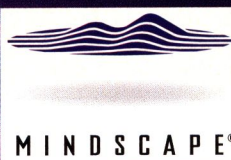


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Tel: 01444 246333 Fax: 01444 248996
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<http://www.nwlink.com/~mikej/su27.html>**

BULLETIN

Robotron X

GT INTERACTIVE ARE RESURRECTING THE OLD arcade classic *Robotron*, dusting down the gameplay and giving it the polygon treatment, ready to re-release it for the PC in time for Christmas.

Anyone who's a tad familiar with the original game will know that it had gameplay by the bucketload and was totally addictive. Essentially, gameplay and storyline are the same: your task is (still) to save the last human family under threat from the Robotron scourge and save humanity. And why is mankind in such danger? Well, apparently our unstoppable urge to

improve robot technology led to the discovery and invention of the Robotrons. Unfortunately for us, the robots' concluded that mankind is inferior and must be terminated. The player takes on the role of a weirdy boffin blessed with superhuman powers after he was involved in a bizarre genetic mutation accident.

Although the original arcade game incorporated a unique dual input control set-up, GT are attempting to emulate this by making the new game compatible with four-button gamepads so you use the 'D' pad to move around and the four fire buttons to aim.

From what we've seen so far, the all-new polygonal *Robotron* looks to be just as playable and addictive as the original, so we reckon GT are onto a winner with this particular revamp.

If all goes well, expect the Williams' back catalogue to get totally re-worked as retro-gaming fever sweeps the globe. **Z**



Classic arcade action re-vamped in a polygonal style.

Meridian 59

YOU PLAY INTERNET QUAKE. YOU play modem *Doom*. And you throw a 70-metre serial cable out of your window to play *Command & Conquer* with your mate across the street. Just when you thought your phone bill couldn't get any bigger and your social life any smaller, along comes another company with another on-line gaming concept to make your phone bill the size of a phone number. The company is 3DO and the game is *Meridian 59*, a magical tunnels and trolls type game played in a realtime 3D universe on line. If you have a normal Internet Provider account, you and the 17,000 other beta testers world-wide can join in a kind of sub-*Wolfenstein* environment, chatting to other adventurers, going on quests, and visiting pubs to meet girls. Yes, girls. We'll be doing a full review next month, but if you're gagging for a go, why not look up the details at 3DO's website at <http://www.3do.com/> **Z**

Mr Tank

DEVELOPERS REBELLION HAVE BEEN BUSY WORKING on four new games over the past year or so, three of which are very hush-hush, and another which isn't hush at all, so we're gonna tell you all about it.

Called *Mr Tank* it's (you guessed it) a tank-based shoot 'em up that (at present) can support up to 16 players on one PC without any real drop in the frame rate (!). If 16 players cramped around one keyboard, squinting at a monitor, trying to figure out which screen is theirs sounds like overkill, rest assured that Rebellion don't intend to incorporate such a facility into the final game, they're just showing off how fast and fluid their new engine is.

When you consider that it can throw around over 3000 sprites, in 256 colours in multiple resolutions ranging from

320x200 to 1280x1024 without any real significant drop in frame rate on a modest Pentium, you can begin to appreciate that

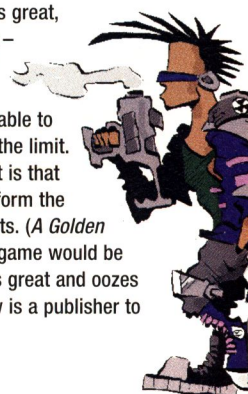
they've got something utterly fab. As well as being multi-player tastic, *Mr Tank* also features a vast and varied fully texture-mapped environment, a very distant and fluid horizon, intelligent light-sourcing and extremely detailed sprite-based tanks that have been rendered in 32 different orientations, so they look good from just about any angle even close-up.

Rebellion are still working on the gameplay side of things, tossing around ideas for level designs, special weapons and power-ups etc, and they're still trying to work out how to implement the multi-player aspect. Two players on one PC is great, while four is just about the limit – after that you tend to run out of room or gamepads (!) but they're confident that they'll be able to stretch their amazing engine to the limit.

One thing is for sure, and that is that this 'uber' engine will probably form the basis of quite a few new products. (A *Golden Axe* style four-player adventure game would be ace). As it stands, *Mr Tank* looks great and oozes potential; all Rebellion need now is a publisher to sign it up and release it. **Z**



Rebellion stretch their uber engine to the limit with *Mr Tank*.



On your marks...



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Dispatches

CH UNLEASH THE FORCE

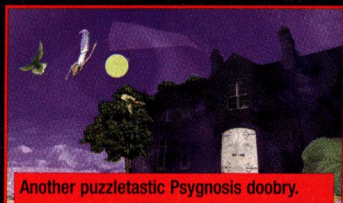
CH products are working on a new joystick which will give you physical 'feedback' when playing your fave games. Gamers will allegedly enjoy 'physical resistance' and recoil while using the stick to play flight simulations, driving games, and space combat and 3D action games (such as *Quake* or *Duke Nukem 3D*). The stick has been tested with *Jetfighter 3* and *Descent 2* and programmers and developers are said to be suitably impressed with the results. For more info contact Barrington Harvey on 01462 456780.

FANCY A FIGHT?

Fighting freaks might want to keep an eye out for *CyberGladiators*, a combat game which apparently lets you design your own moves, and even mess about with the design of the characters. The game features motion-captured kung fu bods, streetfighting nutters and even rucking robots. The graphics look a bit cartoony from what we've seen, but Sierra promise the finished product will be very polished and expect their new fisticuffs extravaganza to do very well indeed. *CyberGladiators* will be in the shops in November. Give Sierra a ring on 01734 303322 for the full gen.

BLUE ICE

Psygnosis are putting the finishing touches to yet another rather ace and fab surreal puzzle/adventure game. *Blue Ice*, as you can tell from the screenshots, looks well weird and freaky-deaky. You take the role of Edward whose quest is to take his rightful place on the throne of his forefathers and wear the crown of injustice, misery and heartlessness (poor bastard!). It seems to be a sort of puzzle-based thingummy bob in which you move along from one screen to another solving all manner of riddles and suchlike. In many ways it sounds like *Myst*, but we'll reserve judgement until we see some code. It has over 30 screens to visit, each with their own different puzzles, and a voice-over by Tom Conti. If you're as confused as we are about the whole thing, give Psygnosis a ring on 0151-282 3000 for more details.



Another puzzletastic Psygnosis doobry.

CM2 START OF SEASON DISK

You can tell when summer is almost over. The leaves on the trees begin to turn brown, the girlies put their shorts away, British Rail start blaming the weather for delays to trains, and Domark (now EIDOS) release their annual start of season update disk.

Well, this year is unlike any other, so if you want to start playing yet another season and get totally up to date on all the latest comings and goings (Shearer at Newcastle, Poborsky at Man Utd etc), you'd best invest in the official *Championship Manager 2 Start Of Season Disk*. As usual it will be knocking about come September and will retail for a (comparatively) modest sum so go and buy it before Man Utd does.

Contact EIDOS Interactive on 0181-780 2222 for further details.

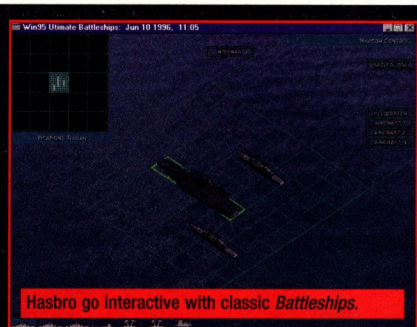
Battleship

HASBRO ARE GETTING INTO THE WORLD OF PC GAMES BIG time, and are in the process of converting many of their highly popular board games into 'interactive' CD-ROM games for the PC.

The first classic game to go 'interactive' is *Battleships*. Obviously, Hasbro have gone some way to liven up the rather limited gameplay, and once a player becomes more experienced, loads of additional options can be accessed, featuring a massive 640x640 grid, multiple fleets (including submerging submarines), new weaponry (including spy planes) and locations (land, islands and ports).

As well as supporting four-player network play over a LAN (Local Area Network) and Internet play, *Battleships CD-ROM* will feature hi-res graphics, a rather smart AI and two discs – a 'master' and a 'slave' so players will be able to go head-to-head without forking out for another copy.

Hasbro are also currently working on a CD-based version of the old parlour room favourite *Cluedo*. Although still early in production, it's thought that the new 'interactive' version of the game will feature oodles of FMV and a four-way network play option. *Battleships CD-ROM* is due for release from Hasbro Interactive in October, followed by *Cluedo* in November/December. **Z**



Hasbro go interactive with classic Battleships.

NASCAR 2

PAPYRUS HAVE ALMOST FINISHED WORK ON the sequel to their highly successful *NASCAR Racing* sim.

Every feature in the game has been tweaked and twonked, before making its journey to sequeldom. *NASCAR 2* features a new user-friendly interface so you can get straight into the action with a minimum of fuss, includes on-line driving lessons for people who are utterly crap.

All the statistics in the game are based on the 1996 season, and all the drivers, teams and tracks have been up-dated accordingly.

It all sounds pretty fab to us and you can be sure as hell that we'll give the game a thorough going-over when we come to review it some time in December. **Z**



Larry's back in town

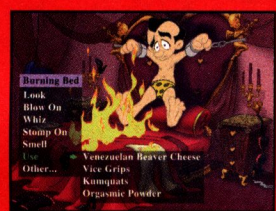
LEISURE SUIT Larry is back for the sixth game in his seemingly never-ending series.

The new game is actually classed as

Leisure Suit Larry 7 (apparently our crimplene-suited onanist got lost or something in game number four so we never saw it, now is that hilarious or what?) and follows Larry's adventures on a luxury cruise.

Wittily entitled *Love For Sail*, this is the first Larry to be set in a real 3D environment. Expect thousands more in-jokes which will amuse no-one but Al Lowe (the game's designer), endless sexual innuendos, and of course lots of badly-drawn bikini-clad girlie stereotypes, none of whom Larry can ever get off with (this is basically what's meant to be so funny about the whole thing). Still, Sierra have sold over three million copies of the *Larry* games to date, so some of you must obviously be dying to get your smelly hands on the latest episode.

Leisure Suit Larry 7: Love For Sail is due for a November release and we'll be reviewing it in a forthcoming issue. **Z**



Ultimate Soccer Manager 2

IMPRESSIONS ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON THE sequel to their mega-selling football management simulation game, *Ultimate Soccer Manager*.

Like the original game, *USM2* will feature all the usual footie management bits, such as player transfers, club finances, ground management etc, as well as a sophisticated new tactics manager that will allow the player to develop their very own set plays and in-game tactics. As well as selecting who takes set kicks, managers will be able to instruct certain players to make runs, hold up play, run with the ball or pass to a selected player.

Different tactics can be set up and saved for both attacking and defensive situations, giving the manager unprecedented control over both team and individual player positioning. Managers will also be able to instruct certain players to man-mark opposition players, change tactics and exploit weak areas of the opposition's defence (if a player is

unfit or injured, for example) whenever the ball goes out of play.

On top of this, there's a sophisticated new training system that allows the manager to focus on the weaker areas in his team, work on the individual player's game and a comprehensive club accounts system that can be tweaked to raise extra cash. If numbers and training aren't your hot beverage, then you'll be able to instruct your assistant manager to look after these dull areas while you get on making big bucks signing and tweaking your tactics.

The look and feel of *USM2* is very similar to the first game, so if you liked it, you'll be gagging for *USM2* when it's released in October through Sierra.

It's probably too early to tell whether it's got the guts to knock Domark's *Championship Manager 2* off the top spot, but the newly developed tactics option should keep hardened managers busy 'til next seasons. **Z**

Phantasmagoria 2: A Puzzle Of Flesh

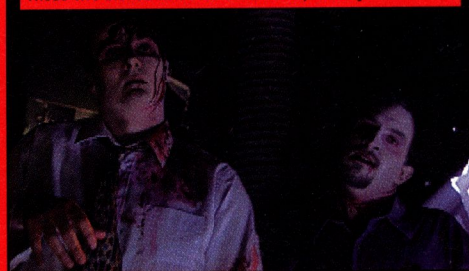
SIERRA ARE CURRENTLY SHOOTING THE (numerous) FMV sequences to the sequel to their blockbuster interactive movie *Phantasmagoria* in sunny California.

Like the original game, *Phantasmagoria 2* will be full of FMV and features even more blood, gore, torture and 'adult' content than the first game. The developers have come up with a spunky new plot and storyline that's got absolutely nowt to do with the first game, so none of the original characters will make an appearance. Penned by horror writer Lorelei Shannon, the plot and storyline focus around the character of Curtis Craig, a quiet young chap, with a steady job. He's been out of the loony bin for almost a year, and now just wants to live a normal life. Sadly, it all begins to go pear-shaped when people all around him start

being brutally murdered and tortured. Without giving too much away, it's a kind of *Angel Heart* meets slushy American soft porn affair scoring high on body and nipple count. Sierra reckon that they're not out to shock their audience, but fear some of the FMV sequences involving small boys and psychotic mothers with knives might not make it into the final version. As before, there will be an 'adult' and 'kids' version, so Mom and Dad can play it with the kids and then switch the schlock back once the nippers are in bed.

Sierra also maintain that thanks to a new video compression software they've developed and some clever programming, characters can now interact with their environment to a much greater degree, which should mean more in the way of gameplay. In other words, they've tried to make it more like *Gabriel*

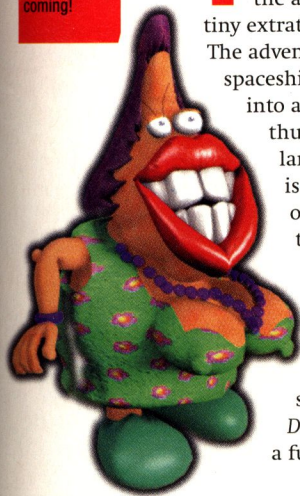
These two blokes don't look at all well, do they?



Knight 2 than *Phantasmagoria*. Having said that, *Phantasmagoria* was one of the best-selling games of '95, with world-wide sales now approaching one million copies. It's a funny old world. **Z**

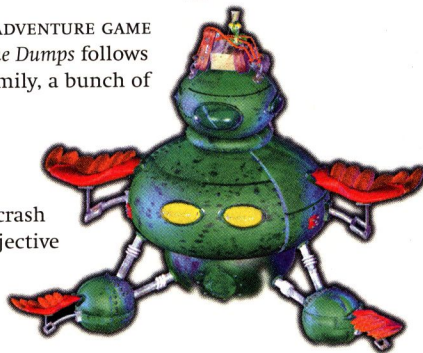
Down in the Dumps?

The Blubs are coming!



YOU WON'T BE AFTER PLAYING PHILIP'S ADVENTURE GAME of the same name (ha-ha). *Down In The Dumps* follows the adventures of the wacky Blub family, a bunch of tiny extraterrestrials.

The adventure starts when the Blubs' spaceship is written off after crashing into a spaceship piloted by violent thugs. Both ships are totalled and crash land on the planet Earth. Your objective is to find the missing elements of the Blubs' spaceship, put the ship back together again, and make sure they get safely home. Your task won't be easy though, as the thugs will stop at nothing to prevent you from completing your mission. The cartoon-style animation is very impressive indeed, but we think the game will capture your attention mainly because the humour is very similar to that of the *Simpsons*, everybody's fave American dimwits. *Down In The Dumps* is set for release at the end of October and we'll bring you a full review as soon as is humanly possible. **Z**



Surf & Shoot for less

SURF & SHOOT, THE NEW GAMES and Internet cafe that's just opened in London, are kindly offering *PC Zone* readers a special introductory offer of two hours for the price of one.

All you need to do to take advantage of this very generous offer is take this copy of the magazine with you and in your best mockney accent say "Oi, I'm ere to take advantage of you", show them this news item and you'll be in network gaming heaven for 120 minutes.

Surf & Shoot has loads of P100s all networked up and ready for action and all the latest network games, so get on down there, grab yourself a coffee and find out what network gaming is all about. **Z**

Keep your head.



Scorched Planet™

Dispatches

BIRTHRIGHT

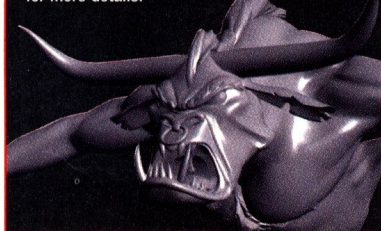
Wow, an RPG with ultra-cool graphics. Can't be right. It is though. *BIRTHRIGHT* from Sierra is a good-looking adventure that is true to the conventions of the TSR *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* series. However, instead of giving you command of just one individual, the game gives you complete control over entire armies, with all your decisions having a direct effect on your immediate environment. The game's released in November. Contact Sierra for more details on 01734 303322.

MORE PINBALL FROM 21ST CENTURY

21st Century's latest offering is the *Pinball Construction Kit*, which (surprise, surprise) allows you to design and build your very own pinball tables simply by pointing, clicking and dropping objects and backgrounds using your mouse. Because this game actually allows you to design your own tables, presumably this means that 21st Century won't be releasing any more pinball games, because if they do, you can just use the *Construction Kit* to copy their designs. We live in hope. The *Pinball Construction Kit* is due for release next month.

HUNTING FROLICS

Hunter Hunted is a new 3D action adventure from Sierra. Players will have a choice of controlling Jack, a well 'ard adventuring type, or a completely bonkers monstie. The game promises multi-level shoot 'em up and adventure action, with a large proportion of traditional puzzle-solving doings. The graphics have been designed on a Silicon Graphics workstation so the visuals should be pretty special. *Hunter Hunted* is set for a November release. We'll hopefully be previewing the game next issue. In the meantime, call Sierra on 01734 303322 for more details.



New from Activision

ACTIVISION ARE SET TO LAUNCH A WIDE RANGE of products in the next six months and are boasting a line-up with tons of variety.

Possibly the most eagerly awaited of these is the latest *MechWarrior 2*-based product, sub-titled *Mercenaries*. Although previous *Mech2* additional products have been put out as add-on mission disks, *Mercenaries* is a totally enhanced standalone product. Featuring a vastly improved, fully texture-mapped graphics engine along with a superb new mission structure, this is a product that's bound to have all *BattleTech* fans wetting their Y-fronts when it finally comes out in the next couple of months.

Unlike the original *MechWarrior 2* (and the subsequent mission disk), *Mercenaries* offers a much greater degree of freedom by placing you as a soldier of fortune within the Mech universe. Setting yourself up as a renegade service for any of the Mech clans, your main aim is basically to perform tasks and earn as much cash as you possibly can. In total there are more than 60 missions for you to fight your way through – and the further you develop your own career throughout these tasks, the more freedom you have.

It has to be said that from what we've witnessed so far, *Mercenaries* is vastly superior to any other 'big robot' game that we've seen to date and as long as all goes according to plan we'll be able to review it next month.

Elsewhere at Activision, the team that worked on the original *MechWarrior 2* engine has been busy on *Interstate 76*. Set in the '70s, the game sees you as an auto-vigilante driving around the desert blowing away bad guys. Fantastic cars, huge weapons, an



On its way... *Interstate 76*.



Robot action a-plenty in *Mercenaries*.

absolutely superb 3D engine and some of the biggest afros and widest flares you've ever seen. A soon-to-be cult classic with a funky soundtrack.

Exploiting the Infocom property still further, we can expect to see a brand new version of the classic *Planetfall* appearing at the end of the year. Deviating from Activision's current strategy of updating the oldies with fairly straightforward point-and-click adventures, *Planetfall* makes use of an advanced 3D engine along with polygonal in-game characters and a snazzy A1 system. If forced to make comparisons, it would have to be said that this owes more than a passing nod to Origin's *System Shock*, although it's far funnier.

Also coming soon is *Hyperblade*, a futuristic hockey variant that seems to take its cue from the Bitmap Bros' *Speedball 2*. What makes this title different is that it uses a 3D engine with motion-captured players similar to Gremlin's *Actua Soccer*. Set in huge bowl-like structures, this is a three-on-three fast-paced violent action-fest. It's also one of the first games to properly support most 3D accelerator cards providing higher quality texture-maps at a much greater frame rate. So watch out for a review soon.

Finally, we have the next game in the *Pitfall* series. Very little information is available at the moment, but we do know that this is a 3D platform game similar in presentation to *Tomb Raider* and *Fade To Black*.

MMmmm! Delicious!



Sally Smith

SHATTERED STEEL

Interplay

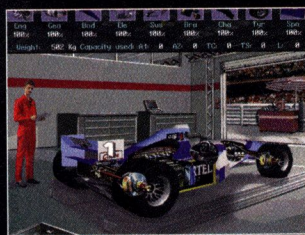
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PC ZONE

our price

Welcome to *PC Zone's* very own version of *The Chart Show*, sponsored by *Our Price*. Each month it'll feature not only the most up to date chart listing the Top Ten best-selling PC CD-ROM titles but it will also play host to exclusive news and competitions.

1

QUAKE
(iD/GT Interactive)
£29.99



6

**SPACE HULK:
VOTBA**
(Electronic Arts)
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2

**Z + DIRECTOR'S
CUT**
(Bitmap Bros/Time Warner)
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7

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(SCI)
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3

F1GP2
(MicroProse)
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8

SCREAMER
(Virgin Interactive)
£19.99



4

**CHAMPIONSHIP
MANAGER 2**
(EIDOS/Domark)
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9

**COMMAND &
CONQUER**
(Virgin Interactive)
£32.99



5

**DUKE
NUKEM 3D**
(EIDOS/US Gold)
£29.99



10

SETTLERS 2
(Blue Byte)
£27.99



Welcome once again to our monthly *Our Price* page, bringing you the latest news and views from *Our Price* stores around the country. It's the easiest way to find out which games you should be checking out – just run your eyes over our countdown of the Top 10 best-selling PC CD-ROM titles. And what's more, we give you a chance to win all ten of them.

This month customers at *Our Price* will be able to take advantage of an exclusive offer when they buy a copy of *Z*, one of the hottest new games around – an offer not to be missed as it includes an extra CD containing the Director's cut version of the game! So make your way to your local *Our Price* quick sharp before stocks run out.

Also available at selected *Our Price* stores will be *Quake*, set to be the biggest game ever!

If you want to take part in this month's *Our Price* Top 10 prize giveaway, put pen to paper and answer the question below. Good luck! Send your entries to the usual address.

OUR PRICE QUESTION: How many tracks are featured in *FIGP2*?

Rules: All entries must be received by 15 October 1996. No correspondence will be entered into – if you ring us up we'll subject you to vitriolic abuse before bunging you into the lions' cage at London Zoo. The editor's decision is final and the winners will be notified by post. All other usual restrictions apply.

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE NEWS FROM OUR PRICE NEXT MONTH!

DISCLAIMER: The Top 10 printed is correct at the time of going to press, but positions, titles and prices may vary throughout the month.



MIRAGE



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CORE

Warwind

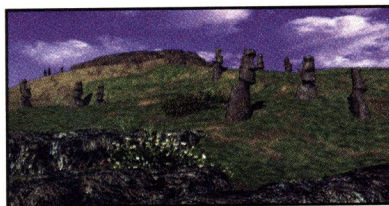
WARWIND IS A NEW STRATEGY game from Mindscape which takes the *Warcraft 2* concept to heady new heights.

Set in a fantasy world, *Warwind* pits four races against each other, one of which you will hopefully lead to victory. The game features 'proper' fantasy names for all the races in the game, with bods like the Tha'Roon, the Eagggra, the Shama' Li, and the Obbl'nox vying for supremacy.

Graphically, *Warwind* looks very similar to *Warcraft 2*, although more complex, with resource management and general tactics much more of an issue than they were in Blizzard's offering.

One of the most important things in games like this is of course the artificial intelligence of the individual units, and in this respect, Mindscape seem to have succeeded where other developers have failed. On the extensive demo of the game, all the units did exactly what you would expect them to do, unlike other games of this ilk that we could mention, but won't for diplomatic reasons (like *Warcraft 2* or *Command & Conquer* for example).

It might be pre-release beta version trickery, but from what we've seen so far, it could be a real pretender for the throne currently occupied by Westwood's mega-seller. **Z**



GTE mess with time...

WITH ZORK NEMESIS CURRENTLY PROVING THAT MYST-STYLE GAMES DO HAVE AN AUDIENCE AMONG PC GAMERS, GTE Entertainment (the American guys and gals behind *FX Fighter*) have released details of *Timelapse*, a game they hope is going to out-*Myst* *Myst*.

"*Myst* was the first title that encompassed everything I had always looked for in a game," comments Lori Nichols, the game's producer. "*Timelapse* is designed to take the *Myst* genre of games to a higher level."

Taking the disappearance of Atlantis as its basis and weaving a tale of time travel, aliens, the ancient Mayan race and an archaeology professor around it, *Timelapse* sees the player travelling from the weird stone heads of Easter Island to Ancient Egypt and, solving the various puzzles and riddles contained within each of them.

The game boasts lush SGI-rendered, photo-realistic imagery and over 40 hours of gameplay, *Timelapse* is due to stun your eyes out of their sockets some time in October. **Z**

Lords Of The Realm 2



HAVING RATHER SENSIBLY ACQUIRED THE RIGHTS TO PUBLISH ALL Impressions' product for the foreseeable future, Sierra have proudly announced the imminent release of *Lords Of The Realm 2*.

The original game wasn't reviewed in *PC Zone* but we can tell you now that it's a very addictive little strategy number that we deem to be the best Impressions game to date. The sequel, as you might expect, is better yet.

The graphics have undergone a complete overhaul and are now in glorious svga. The actual mechanics of the game are a lot more involved too: offering much more of a challenge as you now have to manage every single aspect of your would-be empire, from trade routes and general resource management within your castles, right down to deciding what weapons to make for your army before attempting to invade enemy territory. We've been given a sneak preview of the game and it looks fab. No firm release date has been set for the game as of yet, but for more details contact Sierra on 01734 303322. **Z**

Imperium Galactica

IMPERIUM GALACTICA FROM GT INTERACTIVE LOOKS SET TO CHALLENGE ASCENDENCY FOR TOP PLACE IN THE intergalactic strategy games league. We saw a very early version of the game, and it's looking pretty good already. In terms of gameplay, it borrows rather heavily from many of its contemporaries, with the inclusion of land-based combat not a million miles away from *Command & Conquer* (which can only be a good thing), space combat sequences similar to those in *Star Control 2* (though graphically *Imperium* beats the old classic hands-down), and resource management aspects that are reminiscent of Virgin's *Ascendancy*.

The game is set in the year 2300, a time when humans have managed to make contact with several alien races. An Intergalactic Empire has been formed, which has been broken down into smaller empires. To win the game, you'll need to progress throughout the military ranks to the position of Federation Grand Admiral and eventually, defeat the evil Dargslans. No firm release date has been set as yet, but we'll keep you posted. For more information contact GT Interactive on 0171-258 3791. **Z**



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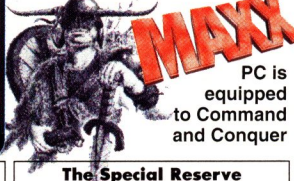
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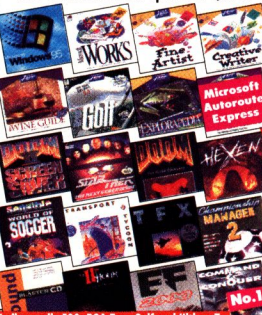
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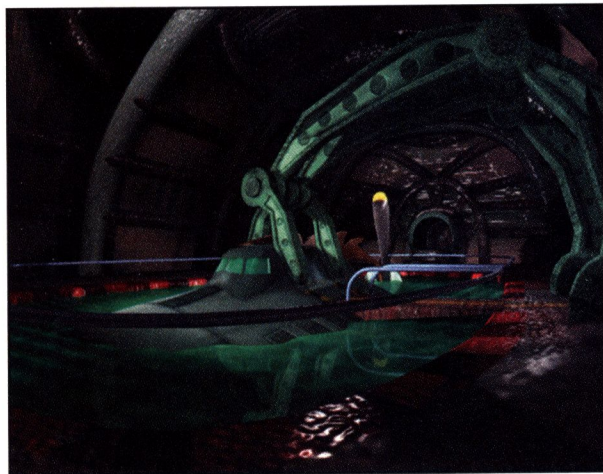
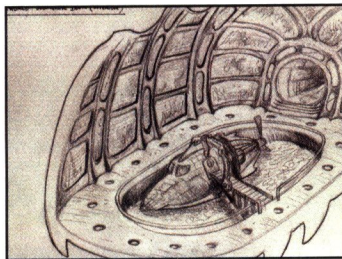
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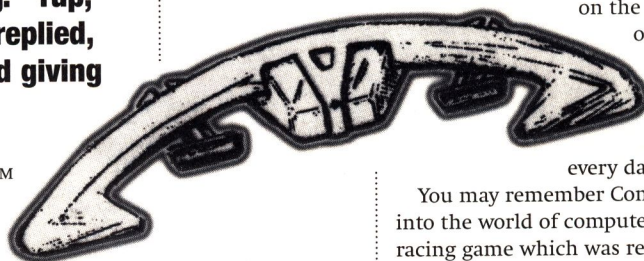
"So they're in Israel?" asked Paul Presley, sensing a free holiday in the offing. "Yup, but you're flying Air Internet," we replied, taking the wind out of his sails and giving him an e-mail address.

LET ME PAINT YOU A PICTURE. FROM WHERE I'M currently sitting I can see what appears to be a mile-long expanse of heavenly-looking beach that stretches outwards towards the crystal-like texture of the blue-blue Mediterranean Sea. People are frolicking and tanning themselves, and look over there – an inflatable beach ball is being playfully struck by the bronzed and athletic limbs of an Amazonian goddess whose bikini could perhaps be the one true answer to the question, 'How long is a piece of

string?' This is truly the paradise called Israel, but sadly for me the whole scene is nothing more than a glossy photograph in an old Thomas Cook holiday brochure which is lying forlornly on my desk as the thunder and lightning outside

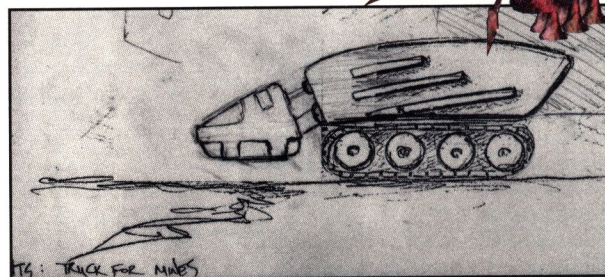


(Above) The guys and gals of Compro.



(Top right) Somewhere in here is authentic Israeli military intelligence. D'ya reckon Mossad know?

At home with... **Compro Games**



my window threaten to turn my modem into electrified goo. Which would be just a little annoying, as currently on the other end of it are Ronnie Yaron, one of the top blokes at Compro Games, and his talented design crew, for whom that panoramic scene in the photograph is just part of where they live and work every day of their lives. Lucky bastards.

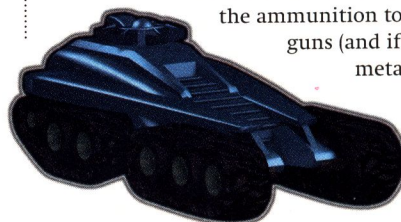
You may remember Compro from their first pilgrimage into the world of computer games, *Cyclemania* – a motorcycle racing game which was remarkable mainly for its use of fully digitised tracks that maintained their video-like quality by being read straight from the CD as the game was running. Although it was good enough to warrant a Recommended award from us back in issue 20, it wasn't enough to launch Compro headlong into the cut and thrust world of premier division gaming houses. As with so many foreign developers, they seemed to have their 15 days of fame in the UK, only to then vanish from the scene, never to be heard of again.

No Compro-mises here

However, enter software house Gametek, and Compro are back with us once again. This time though they have not just one technically impressive title to show off, but three, all of which look just a little bit stunning and appear to be packed with enough gameplay to keep memories of an over-anticipated space trading sim firmly at the back of Gametek's mind.

So perhaps it's time now for a little background material. Who exactly are Compro Games, where did they come from and why have they been so quiet for the past year or so? Well, the games company is just an offshoot of a much larger corporation – Compro Software Systems Ltd – which has been around for over 11 years. The reason you probably wouldn't have heard of them before is because a lot of their work is in "software development for real-time military Command & Control systems," they explain across the digital ether. "Our programmers bring their in-depth knowledge of military systems technology into the area of games development, adding to the realism and excitement of all our games."

Realism like *Surface Tension*, perhaps? Well, perhaps not. *Surface Tension* is Compro's attempt to show that when it comes to fast-moving combat, they've got the ammunition to do battle with the big guns (and if I use one more fighting metaphor in this paragraph, feel free to shoot me).



Using a variant on the familiar Voxelspace technology (as seen in the *Comanche* series from Novalogic), *Surface Tension* puts you in the seat of a futuristic little fighter craft that's been sent to do battle with the overwhelming forces of an evil business corporation. The story is that they hold the key to curing the Earth's population of a deadly disease, but the only way to get it is to fight through level after level of bad-guy infested landscapes (including Mars, 10 and the moons of Saturn and Neptune – although how accurately they'll be mapped is really neither here nor there).

Sticking with the futuristic theme, but this time heading in a completely different direction, is *NET: Zone*. Now I know what you're thinking. You've made a mental note of the title and theorised that it's just another boring 'cyber' thriller set within a futuristic computer network with totally unbelievable graphics. And okay, so it's not the most original idea for a story: an evil computer genius is planning to spread a 'killer' virus throughout the computer systems of the world and only you can stop him. But *NET: Zone* has quite a lot going for when you give it a second glance.

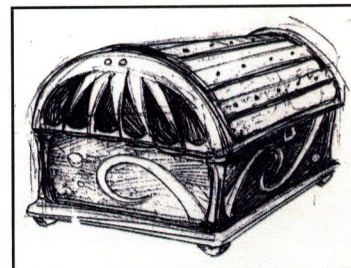
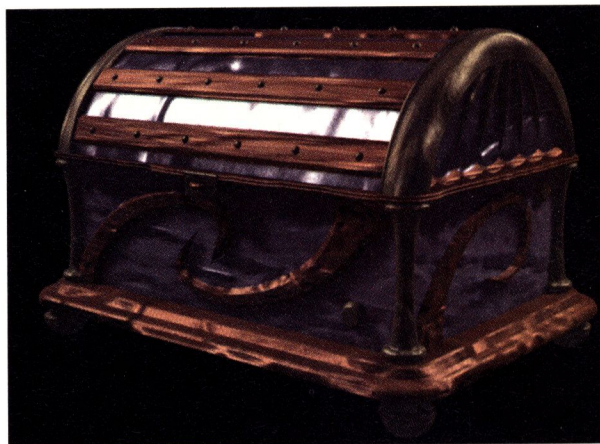
For starters, this is an open-ended, non-linear 'proper' adventure game (the kind that concentrates on puzzles and challenge rather than linking one video clip to another). Then there's the fact that it looks bloody fantastic. Unlike a lot of *Myst/Zork Nemesis*-style games, there's actually movement going on. It's also encouraging to hear Compro admit to targeting an intelligent player: "Our target audiences are older teens and adults and they demand the best. They want action, explosive visuals and intense plots – in short, the ultimate sensory challenge. Our designers understand the importance of 'playability'."

Not the Knights Templar

The third game, *Soul Hunt*, is a little tricky to pigeonhole. At times it's an *Azrael's Tear*-style role-playing adventure, then at other times it's a *Screamer*-style racing game with guns. Jumping onto the medieval-pagan ritual bandwagon (but



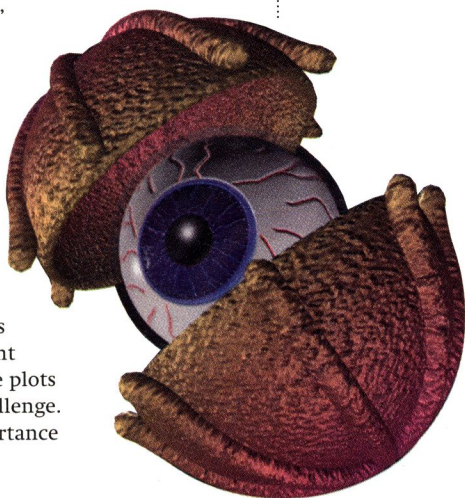
(Above and right) Each image has to be painstakingly drawn by hand before it can be turned into fully-rendered pieces of animation.



managing to avoid the seats reserved for the Knights Templar for a change), the story tells of an old professor who stumbles across an ancient and evil grimoire. Taking a rather unhealthy interest in it, it's not long before he succumbs to the dark side and, in an almost *Scooby Doo* twist, invites you and your friends to an ancient castle where he starts to bump you off. Soon you're the only one left and you've got to find out what's going on before it's too late.

For some reason that I can't quite fathom, all this involves jumping in a jeep and battling others *Road Rash*-style, before stopping at various mysterious sites to pick up clues using what Compro describe as a QuickTime VR style interface. Still, as you can see from the shots, it all looks pretty impressive and I'm told that the non-driving bits involve photo-realistic graphics but with full freedom of movement for the player. Much like *Cyclemania* in fact.

Anyway, I will now draw a veil over my adventure with Compro Games. Partly because there are no more games to tell you about, partly because I've been so totally zonked by these titles that I've zilcho energy left to tell you about any more, but mostly because a lightning bolt has just exploded outside my window and in the process fried my modem, reset my computer and caused the speakers on my stereo to start humming. It's not easy, this journalism lark, you know. **Z**



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F1 Manager



If you want to read a fairy tale, you buy a book by the Brothers Grimm. If you want to read a computer game preview, you buy *PC Zone*. Er, but not today chum. Blame Duncan MacDonald.

ONCE UPON A TIME EVERYONE in the land of Anorak was very unhappy, because there

weren't any Grand Prix management games. But then one day, a shimmering pixie appeared and painted a magic rainbow across the sky.

"Look at that," cried King Parka, pointing through his castle window.

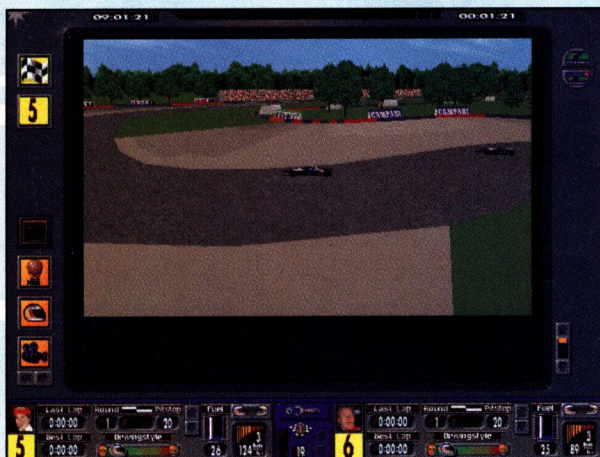
"I wonder what it can be," said his wife, Queen Flak-Jacket, looking bemused.

The shimmering pixie materialised

(Above) It's looking good, Vern! Create car parts in the pseudo CAD section.



(Below) Overall it looks fab, and the races are in real-time too. Lummy!



before them, hovering in the air.

"What you see is my magic rainbow," it said. "If you follow the colours and find the spot where they touch the ground, you will also find a Grand Prix management game."

The King thanked the shimmering pixie profusely, and gave it a bag of gold.

Things began to look up... The King and his loyal subjects followed the magic rainbow for three whole days and nights, and on the fourth day they found what they were looking for.

"This must be it," announced the King, holding aloft a shiny disc. "It seems to be called *MicroProse Grand Prix Manager*." (Oh no! - Ed.)

"Will you please make copies for us, sire?" asked a lowly goat-herder.

"Of course I will," replied the kindly monarch, smiling benevolently.

Before long everyone in the land owned a copy of *MicroProse Grand Prix*, yet still they were unhappy.

"It's got its problems though, hasn't it?" moaned the Queen, in the privacy of the royal gaming room.

"Hmmm. I'll see what I can do," the King replied, stroking his long grey beard.

"Your Highness," said Shell-Suit the court jester, "I've had a thought. Maybe we went to the **WRONG** end of the rainbow. Maybe if we..."

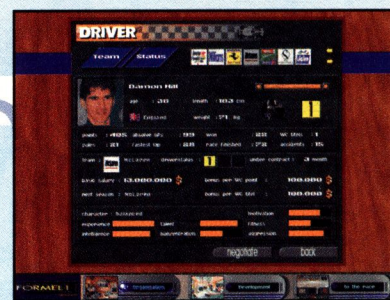
Happily ever after?

"I think this might well be a corker," mused the King. "It took a while to get into, but it's all starting to hang together now. I can even design my own car parts in this pseudo CAD section!"

"Well done darling," said the Queen.

"The balance between the boring-ish bits and the actual racey stuff is pretty much on the button," continued the King. "The necessity to battle against the clock ties them together perfectly."

"I know," nodded the Queen, "For me it all comes down to being able to watch the races in real-time, from camera angles of my own choosing. And the pitstop strategy implementation is



superb, as is the presentation of the product as a whole."

"Indeed," said the King, "My only real concern is that the bitmapped cars seem to drive 'through' one another, rather than overtake; the programme also hangs quite a lot, and some of the text is in German. Do you think the pixie gave us an *unfinished* version?"

"Possibly," said the Queen. "But it's only a matter of time before it'll be back for more gold, and then we can get the packaged copy!"

The moral of this tale is this: *F1 Manager* looks really, really fab! If you want to know more (and you'd be wise to), tune in to next month's review. **Z**

Product details

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Publisher: Europress Software

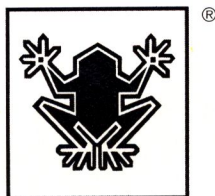
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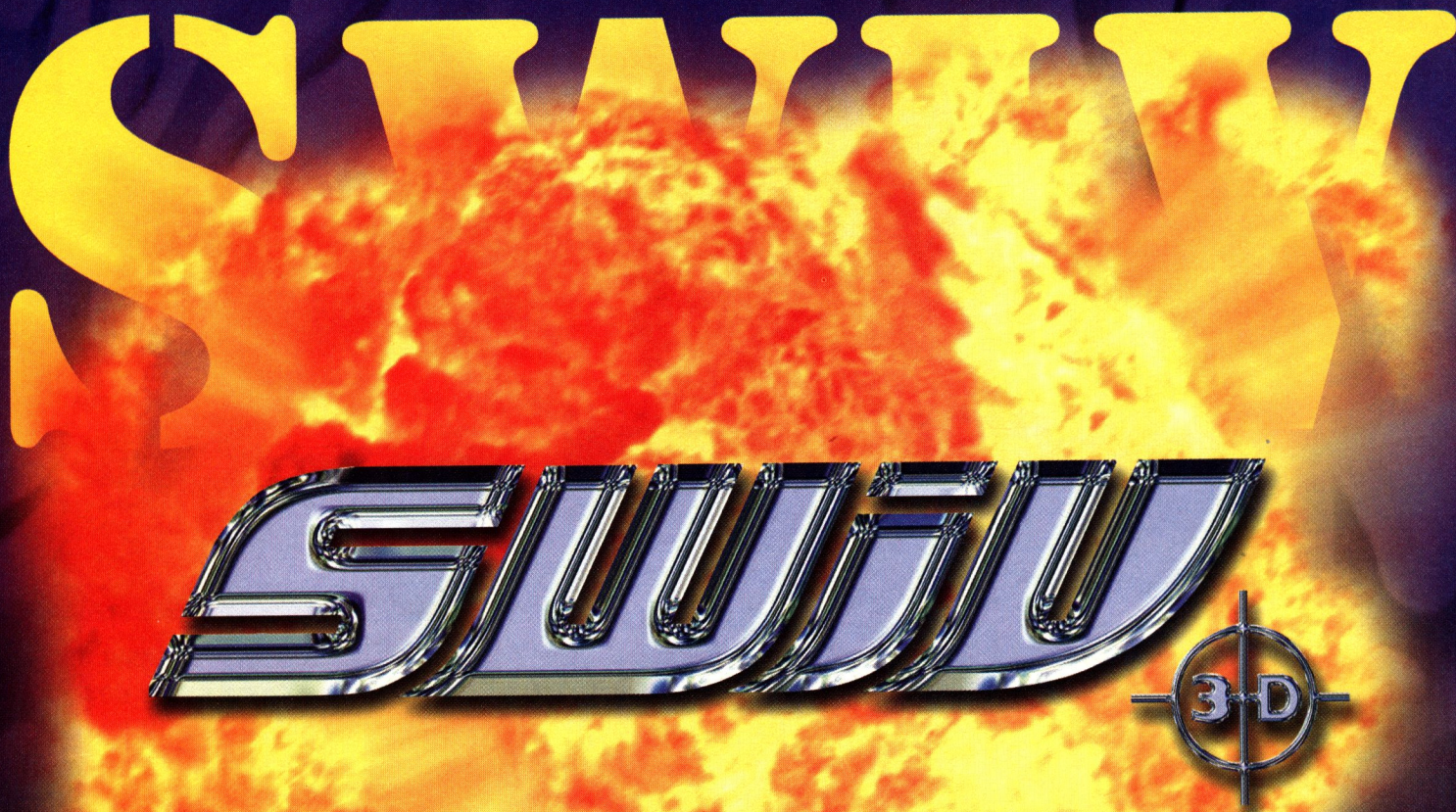


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Rowan just about managed to hold their own against the Americans when their *Dawn Patrol* went head-to-head against Origin's *Wings Of Glory*. Can their latest WWI sim send Sierra's forthcoming *Red Baron 2* into a tail-spin before it's even released? Jeremy Wells went to check on the Allied operational HQ – Runcorn.

Flying Corps

IF YOU WANT TO PLAY A HALF-WAY decent WWI flight sim on your PC right now, your options are severely limited. Basically, you can choose between *Wings Of Glory* from Origin, *Red Baron* from Sierra and *Dawn Patrol* from Rowan.

Of these select few, one (*Red Baron*) is now quite ancient, while the other two (although considered cutting edge at the time) can only be described as pretty ordinary by today's 'Pentium only' standards when compared to the photo-realistic graphics of, for example, *Flight Unlimited* or the sophisticated real-time battle arenas of *EF2000* or *US Navy Fighters*.

As far as sequels go, Sierra have confirmed that they're working on *Red Baron 2*, but the fact that the release has been delayed from around Christmas time to February/March next year would suggest that they've hit a few problems. Which brings us neatly to Rowan, who are also working on *Flying Corps*, the follow-up to their highly successful *Dawn Patrol*. Except that *Flying Corps* isn't actually a sequel, but a completely new sim that uses new technology based on what the team have learnt from their work on *Dawn Patrol* and *Dawn Patrol Head-to-head*.

Dawn Patrol and then some then...?

Although *Dawn Patrol* was well received, it did have its critics. Not everyone liked the way the game was structured, and

(Right) Because the flight model is so realistic it actually treats the wings as two separate entities. It's therefore possible to fly certain aircraft even when one of the wings has been shot off (!).

although it was packed full of different scenarios, aircraft and

pilots, even its biggest fans felt that it needed some kind of campaign feature similar to that found in *Wings Of Glory*. Other criticisms were that the terrain was too flat and featureless, and then there were those yellow fingernailed types who felt that the flight model was not as accurate as it might be.

Thankfully, Rod Hyde and the rest of the team at Rowan are well aware of people's opinions on *Dawn Patrol* and are determined to use lessons learnt from past experience to make *Flying Corps* absolutely perfect.

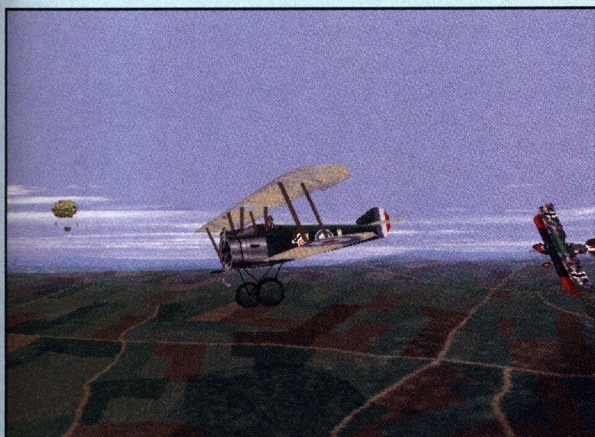
For starters they've really gone to town on the terrain. Instead of just bunging in a few hills here and there to make it look convincing, they've attempted to accurately recreate the landscape of northern France circa 1916 down to the very last tree. Normally, when you recreate a landscape in a flight sim, you grab some satellite data, bash it into your code and bosh – you've got a fairly accurate representation to

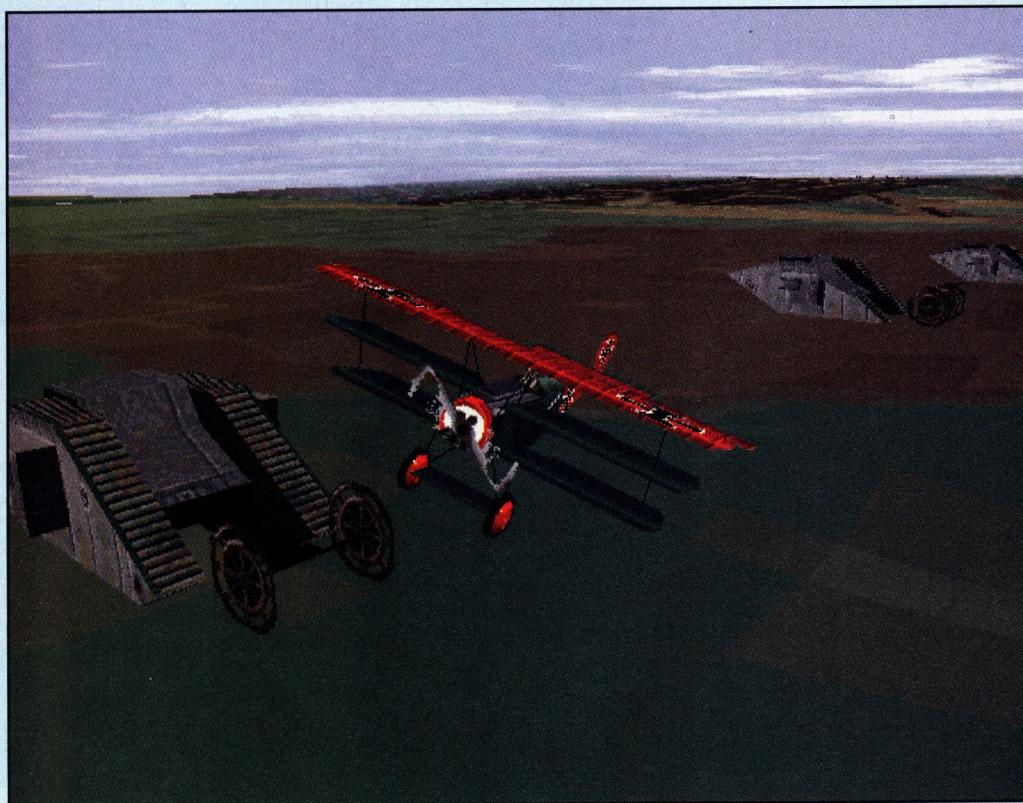
play around with. Rowan weren't able to follow this route because satellites weren't around in 1916 (obviously), so they had to resort to poring over every map, chart and photo they could find on the area and painstakingly recreate every road, river, track, forest and field by hand. To make sure that it was visually representative, some of the team even went

over to France for a couple of weeks to take photos of certain buildings, bridges and landmarks for the artists to incorporate into the game – some of the photos of buildings were even texture-mapped onto polygons for total authenticity.

The result is that Rowan now have the most detailed, accurate and realistic landscape ever developed for a flight sim. Rod reckons that if you add up the combined team effort, it took around one and a half man years to produce. In total, the game area covers around 150km by 150km and takes in the environs of the Somme and Verdun. Of that area, around 100 square kilometres is 'high' detail, which means you'll see an accurate representation of the landscape below you. All the trees, buildings, roads and rivers and German and Allied lines will be included, correctly texture-mapped and in exactly the same place

(Below) *Flying Corps* will run in 640x480 mode, which means you'll need a pretty beefy Pentium to get the most out of it. At the moment it's running at about 12 fps, but the code hasn't been optimised yet.





as they were in 1916. Another 50km beyond that area, the landscape will be 'medium detail', which means that it will still be true to life in geographic and historic terms, but not so detailed. Beyond this band, the landscape gets pretty basic, although it will still feature all the correct hills, rivers and roads, so you'll be able to navigate your way back to the detailed bits and (hopefully) back home.

So why go to so much trouble? Rod explains: "We wanted *Flying Corps* to be the most detailed and accurate flight sim ever. A lot of it is based around actual historical events and we wanted to give the player a fair representation of what the landscape and conditions were really like. The more realistic it is, the more the player can appreciate what it was like to navigate using very basic instruments. In many ways, flying the plane and the dogfights were only a small part of it. Many pilots simply got lost on their way home, wandered into enemy territory and were shot down. We wanted to bring this element into the game."

And some more...

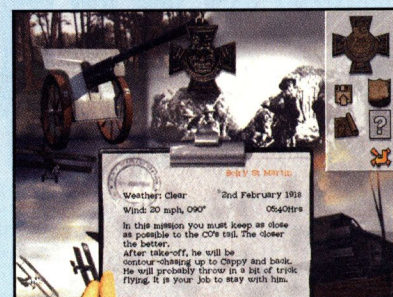
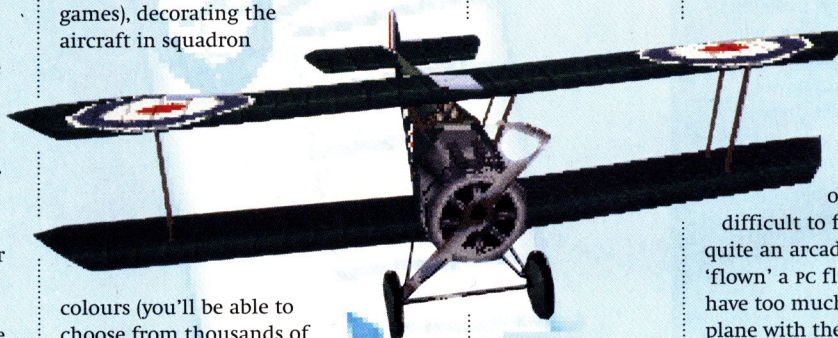
On the campaign side of things, you really will be spoilt for choice. Basically, you'll be able to fly one-off single missions (balloon busting, escort missions, bombing sorties etc), special tutorial missions that actually teach you how to fly and accomplish certain manoeuvres, as well as four historically accurate campaigns to work through. There will also be a 'Scramble' mode where you have to deal with random threats, and the facility to fly on the side of the Allies or as part of the German war effort.

As players progress in campaign mode they'll be promoted (if they're successful) and, should they reach a high enough rank, they'll be able to conduct their very own squadron. This means the player will be responsible for training new recruits, devising tactics (the final game will feature a click and drag formation screen a bit like those found in football management games), decorating the aircraft in squadron

colours (you'll be able to choose from thousands of authentic markings and hues), squadron morale, who flies what missions, and basic management. You'll also be able to respond to challenges from other aces, and if you read the papers and follow the headlines, initiate some challenges of your own. Essentially, you'll be able to play *Flying Corps* whichever way you want: as a series of one-off one-on-one shoot 'em ups, as a rookie hot-shot desperate for promotion, or as a squadron leader and tactician. The choice is yours.

Start Rod talking about flight models and the chances are you'll have a full beard by the time he's finished (even if you're a girl). This man knows more about physics than Scottie from *Star Trek*. Forget *Dawn Patrol*, that was just a warm up - this is the real thing.

(Above) Once you've learnt a few basic manoeuvres, you'll be able to pull off some pretty tight turns by keeping an eye on your lift/drag and making good use of the rudder.



In *Flying Corps* you'll have to actually learn to fly a ww1 plane, just like those magnificent men did 80-odd years ago. As well as the in-game tutorials, Rowan are considering including 'real' pilots' notes on how to fly certain manoeuvres to help the player. To get around the problem of feedback, they'll be two little green lights in the corner of the screen at all times (one for each wing) that turn from yellow to red depending on how close you are to stalling (or how much drag and lift each wing is giving you). By monitoring these and your air speed, and carefully moving the joystick and rudder pedals, it's pretty easy to keep yourself afloat. Turn on the gyro-

scope function and numerous other sim bits and it gets a bit more difficult. Essentially, the way the flight model is constructed, you can opt to make each of the six aircraft as easy or

difficult to fly as you wish. There's not quite an arcade mode, but anyone who's 'flown' a rc flight sim before shouldn't have too much trouble, while flying a plane with the realistic 'difficult' options should keep the purists contented.

Although *Flying Corps* isn't due out until late October, it's already clear that Rowan are on the brink of completing one of the most realistic and authentic flight sims ever. Whether it will hold off the challenge of *Red Baron 2* is anyone's guess - but don't be surprised if Sierra decide to slightly delay its release once they see what Rowan have achieved. **Z**

Product details

Developer: Rowan

Publisher: Empire Interactive

Telephone: 0181-343 7337

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: November

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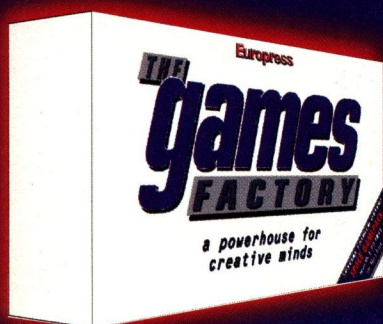
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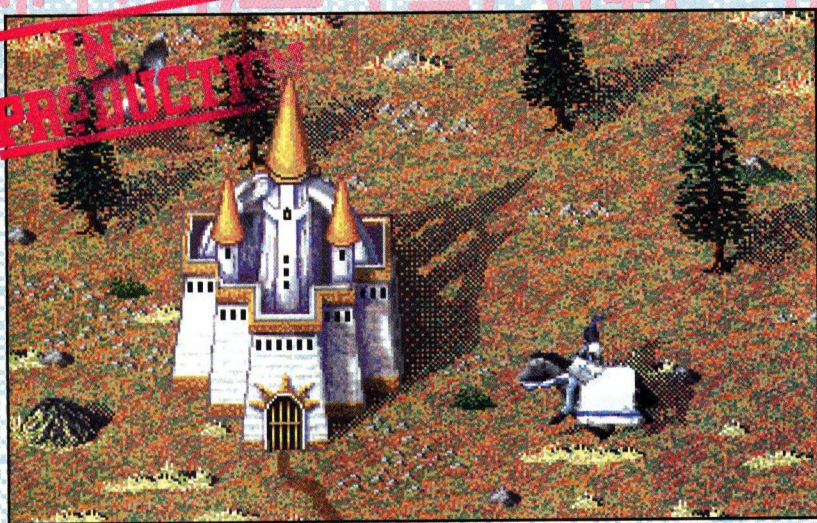
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Magic: The Gathering

What happens when *Top Trumps* grows up and meets the world of role-playing games? **Paul Presley** is our man with the pointy hat and the severe case of Shuffler's Finger.



(Left) The adventure game features a lot of the creatures from the actual card game; the only difference is that here they move, talk and fight.

(Right) Mystic Meg's career takes an unfortunate turn.



Product details

Developer: MicroProse

Publisher: MicroProse

Telephone: 01454 893893

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: September



(Above) Play your cards right and you might even get mermaids and dogs – woooo!

(Below) In this duel, the bottom player is building an army of small creatures while the top player is settling into a defensive position...

WELL *TOP TRUMPS* WAS NEVER 'anorakish' was it? Honestly, it's getting so a man can't have an ordinary hobby without being labelled as some kind of sad, train-spotting, socially unacceptable outcast. It's not as if I'm beheading small babies or exposing myself in public, is it? It's only a game. Okay, so it's got wizards in it! And dragons! And you cast spells and that! It's just a bloody game, that's all! I don't go around thinking I can do magic in real life or anything! I don't go down the shops and say, "Right, give me 20 Rothmans or I'll tap my island and cast a Freeze Newsagent spell on you!" I do drink beer you know! I like women! IT'S ONLY A SODDING GAME!!! (There, there. Calm down – Ed.) Sob.

Er, anyway...

Social skills notwithstanding, *Magic: The Gathering* is, in case you live in the blissful town of Unaware or the

neighbouring village of Ignorance, a phenomenally successful card game that has swept the world and revitalised the non-computer games industry, much as *Dungarees & Drag Queens* did back in the '70s (*Dungeons & Dragons* – Ed.) Now you can't move in the games section of the Virgin Megastore for fear of knocking over a well-stacked display of card decks, covering just about every subject you can think of from Wizards to Modern Warfare to Spaceships and Aliens. There are even the licensed games such as *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Highlander* and any number of Marvel Super Heroes to do battle with.

But *Magic* was the original and still, most enthusiasts would argue, the best, having sold over 500 million cards across the world since its inception in 1993. The idea is so simple it hurts – you have a deck of cards (spells), you can pick and choose what cards are in that deck from the thousands available

– which, naturally, you have to find and buy first – then you 'duel' (as it were) with a 'friend' (so to speak) by casting the spells at each other until one of you drains the other's life points. The spells include monsters to attack with, weapons to do direct damage with and other spells that affect the shape of each game in lots of different ways.

Sid Meier, Wizard at Large

There are two sides to MicroProse's version, a single-player adventure style game that's been designed by avid *Magic* player and all-round games Buddha, Sid Meier (in his last project for MicroProse before he sets up shop by himself), and a straight one-on-one duel with the computer. The adventure game is

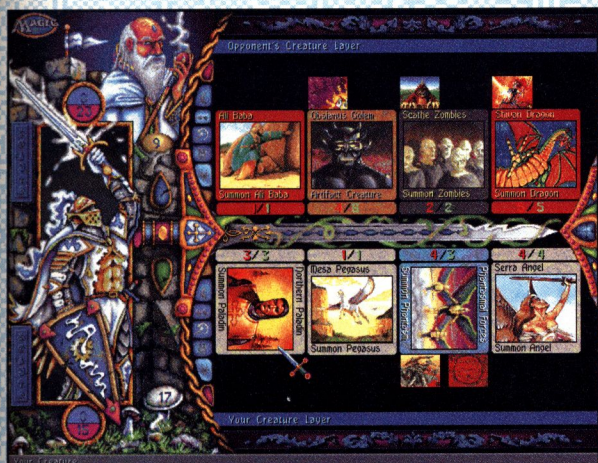


Duelling all over the world

Once MicroProse have released the first version of *Magic* to the world and stood back to see how it goes, they'll set about releasing the second version. What's in the second version, you ask? Only the most important feature of all – network options! Yes, forget about *Quake*, wave goodbye to *Command & Conquer*, bid farewell to, er, *Falcon 3*. Multi-player *Magic* is where the future's at baby, and you'd better book your ticket now, 'cos when this train pulls outta the station, there ain't no one gonna be left on the platform...

Ahem, sorry. Enthusiasm and all that. Networks, servers and of course the Internet will all feature in the second version of the game (which will be an add-on for the first rather than a separate entity), allowing players to start duelling each other right around the world. Finally the global village! The world unites in a common cause. Wars are fought with cards not guns! Gibber. (Perhaps you should lie down – Ed.)





designed to act as an introduction to the world of *Magic* and teaches you about the different elements of the game as you play. The idea is that you are a lone wizard out to save the world by battling other creatures and wizards across the land of Shandalar. Every combat takes the form of a *Magic* card duel and the player has to build up a collection of cards (spells) as he journeys until he's powerful enough to defeat the ultimate menace.

It's the trading aspect that has made *Magic* into the phenomenon that it is today. Because there are so many different cards and because a large number of them have only limited print runs, getting your hands on certain cards in real life becomes a very tricky affair. It's rather like the days of Panini football stickers from your schooldays (repeat after me: "Got, got, need, got, need, got, got, ooh an Arsenal badge. I'll give you five Ipswich players for it. All right six, and two Steve McMahons..."), the only difference being that a really rare card can fetch anything up to \$500 and even the lowliest of common ones can still sometimes prove more useful than anything else in your deck. It's all about strategy. Know your cards, know your deck and know what you need to improve it.

Meier has chosen to implement this vital side of the product into the single-player adventure game by including shops and trading caravans in the game

(Right) ...Whereas this duel sees two armies of very powerful creatures going at it. I could commentate on chess, me.



(Below) A peaceful little cottage in a peaceful little village. Where's a good fireball when you need one?



world. As the player travels and duels, thus slowly building up his collection of cards, he can visit different shops that will have different cards available either to buy or to trade with. The straight duelling game works by including every card in the real-world starter editions and the first two expansion packs for you to pick and choose from at will. You're probably thinking that's a bit daft, aren't you? Surely everyone will just pick the best cards and have the perfect deck? And you'd be right, if it wasn't for one little thing. There's no such thing as the perfect deck.

It's precisely that reason why *Magic* has proved so popular. Because there are so many different cards, and because they all work in different ways with each other, as I said, there's no such thing as the one perfect deck. Every

card has strengths and weaknesses.

Certainly, some are vastly powerful, but there's always a way to beat every deck. That's why strategy is so important in the game: you have to decide in advance which kind of deck is going to be the best bet to beat your opponent. A deck full of quick-to-cast creatures that take a long time to wear your opponent down or a deck that takes its time, setting up its pieces slowly and carefully, then delivering one all mighty knockout blow just before the end? How about a defensive deck that nullifies everything your opponent tries to do but doesn't do a lot of damage in return? The options, like life, are limitless. And since my dearly beloved grandmother used to say, "Always leave them on a metaphor for life", that's exactly what I'll do. **Z**



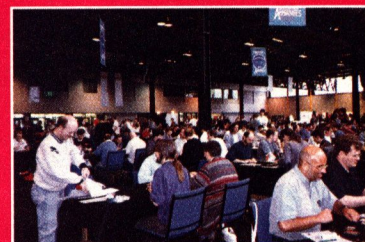
One fine day in Birmingham

Well, the Birmingham NEC to be exact. Last June saw the first ever UK National *Magic* Championships, an event that determined just who was the best *Magic* player in the country and who would be representing our fair isle in the grand finals to be held later this year in America. Despite the oppressive heat and the fact that it was held on the same day as the England versus Spain quarter-final in the Euro 96 tournament (God, those penalties...), there was a very impressive turn-out.

As well as the actual tournament, there were also the obligatory people in silly costumes wandering around all over the place, bashing each other senseless with polystyrene swords and several exhibitions of the Wizards' newest games - *Netrunner*, which depicts the cyberpunk world first invented by William Gibson, and *Vampire*, which needs no real description save that it leans towards the Tom Cruise/Brad Pitt/aren't vampires really cool imagery than the Christopher Lee/Hammer Horror stable.



See! Girls do play *Magic*! By the way, if anyone can identify this lovely young woman, could they get in touch with us here at PC Zone, Lechery Towers, Drool Street...



From all corners of the country they came to prove once and for all who has the fluffiest hood.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Gene Wars

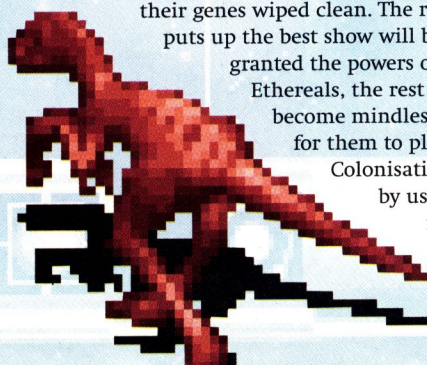


Growing up, Paul Presley used to have to share clothes with his younger brother. Consequently, with only a single pair of Levis in the house, he would often find himself in the middle of a good old-fashioned trouser fight. Fortunately for him, such youthful hi-jinks have at least provided him with a suitable intro joke for Bullfrog's latest.

AND IF YOU THOUGHT that joke was bad, you should see some of the gags in the manual to Bullfrog's entry into the world of resource management simulations. A race of large-nosed aliens called Schnozzoids (ask your parents), a laid-back species called Bohemians, highly evolved kangaroos being made judges in court sessions, and Captain Jean-Luc Pontiac commanding a massive starship. Typical Bullfrog humour really.

But *Gene Wars*. You've heard a lot of talk, seen the image-sparse adverts and recognise the pedigree. So what's it all about? Well, before you take a look at

(Above) No guns but a giant cruise missile type thing..



the screenshots and start crying, "Forsooth, 'tis naught but *Command & Conquer* in differing garb! A *Dune II* by any other name!" let me just remind you that it was Bullfrog that invented the whole genre back in the old days of gaming lore with a simple little title called *Populous*. Okay, so it didn't have the firepower and graphical quality of Mr Westwood and his associates, but it was a classic, and without it the gaming world would be very, very different.

This time the hook is that you have to develop colonies on different planets (in the traditional mining/resource, gathering/terrain exploring manner of all these games, except that you're not allowed to be violent). Following an intergalactic war that near-ravished the area so competently described as outer space, the Ethereals, a Vorlon-style race of super-intelligent aliens, stepped in and threatened to genetically remove all the aggression genes from the younger races, forcing them to work together or become mindless poetry students.

Now each race has to fulfil a selection of planetary colonisation tasks or have their genes wiped clean. The race that puts up the best show will be granted the powers of the Ethereals, the rest will become mindless slaves for them to play with. Colonisation works by using your four



types of worker (engineers, geneticists to develop new creatures for your gene pods to grow, botanists to provide you with plantlife and rangers to look after your creatures and animals) to meet the conditions of each planet. Sometimes you'll just need to harvest enough goop (the 'currency' of the game), sometimes you'll need to grow a certain type of creature, and sometimes you'll just need to survive. And always you'll need to stay in the Ethereals' good books.

So... no guns then?

Well, not strictly speaking. You see, the Ethereals don't have eyes everywhere and so when they're not around you are free to do as you please, and be as violent as you like. Unfortunately you're never quite sure when they're going to turn up and so the game becomes a serious case of quick attacks followed by some innocent whistling. Especially in multi-player, IPX-network mode.

Graphically, *Gene Wars* takes those classic '50s B-movies as its cue. *Flash Gordon*-style rocket ships, the occasional hollering of "To the far reaches of SPACE!!!" from one of the on-screen characters and a manual that's littered with stills from films such as *They Came From Venus* and *Killer Babes From Planet Mammurian* (I kid you not).

Gene Wars looks as though it will have enough variety, humour and all-round entertainment value necessary to set it apart from its rivals. We'll bring you the full verdict as soon as Bullfrog get the game finished, which should be real soon now. **Z**



Product details

Developer: Bullfrog

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Telephone: 01753 549442

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: October

Start Here

LET THE KILLING BEGIN...

bits
corporation

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"The shoot 'em up has come of age," we said to **Patrick McCarthy**. "I see," was his response. But he didn't really.

SWIV 3D



QUITE WHAT 'COMING OF AGE' MEANS when applied to a shoot 'em up is slightly beyond me. Maybe it means it has to wander about in an ill-fitting suit among relatives it scarcely knows, in the hope of loading up with envelopes full of hard cash. Or perhaps we have to shut it in a dirty shed and starve it for three days, then circumcise it with a rusty cheese knife. More likely, it's just PR-speak for "We've done a shoot 'em up and unless we say something fancy about it, all the snobby PC owners who look down on console games will ignore it." After all, SWIV's been around in one form or another since back in the days when games looked like a digital watch gone wrong.

Don't panic, though - this isn't another one of those poxy 'retro' games that everyone who doesn't have to pay for the buggers gets so excited about, where you spend two grand on a Pentium and another 40 quid on top to play a game you could have had on a Spectrum six years ago. This one's been made all modern and 'with it'. Even the name means something different. It used to

(Above) Come on, be honest, what would you prefer - to play in a land where it's always Christmas (*SWIV 3D*) or a place that looks like the inside of your lav (*old SWIV*)?

(Right) Tired of this 3D gaming lark? Want to make your own chopper? This is where you do it. (Probably.)

(Left) The hills are alive with the sound of... er... shooting.



stand for Silk Worm IV, but not any more. The world moves on... And being a shoot 'em up, tradition demands that your mindless carnage be encapsulated within a ludicrous plot.

You are an ex-special forces soldier who's making a tidy living by churning out novels about your supposed death-dealing past, even though you were only a cook in the special forces and the only death-dealing you did was during that unfortunate salmonella accident. Somewhere in the world there's a civil war going on. And with the inevitability that must sometimes make you wish you didn't live in shoot 'em up land, your daughter is kidnapped by rebel troops - presumably in the hope that your cooking skills run in the family and they'll be able to use her as a chemical weapon. So, with a heartfelt sigh, off you go to win her back in your

helicopter and jeep (known as Special Weapon Interdiction Vehicles so that the game can still be called SWIV).

The bare facts

And what you find is a full 3D landscape, somewhat reminiscent of the one in *Magic Carpet*. And a tactical shoot 'em up approach, somewhat reminiscent of *Desert Strike* (shoot the radars and you've more chance of sneaking about undetected; shoot certain objectives before certain power-ups appear, etc). Except that the action is about five times more hectic. There are four different landscapes, including Arctic, Lunar and Martian attack scenarios (that'll teach them to throw fossils at us). And a number of different ground-based vehicles, including skidoos and lunar buggies. And shitloads of weapons and power-ups to help you in what looks like being a bloody difficult task. We'll tell you all about it next month. If you're good. **Z**

Product details

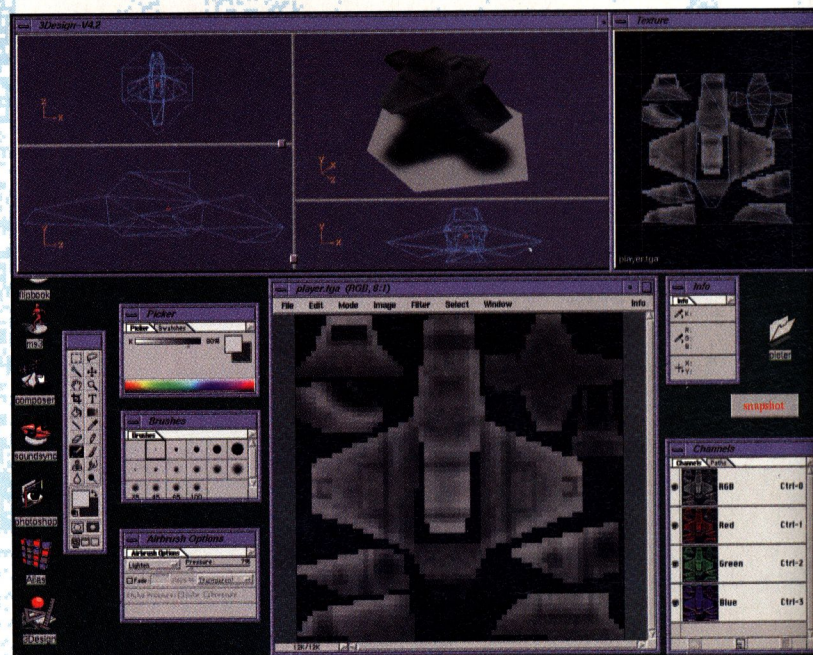
Developer: Sales Curve Interactive

Publisher: Sales Curve Interactive

Telephone: 0171-585 3308

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: September



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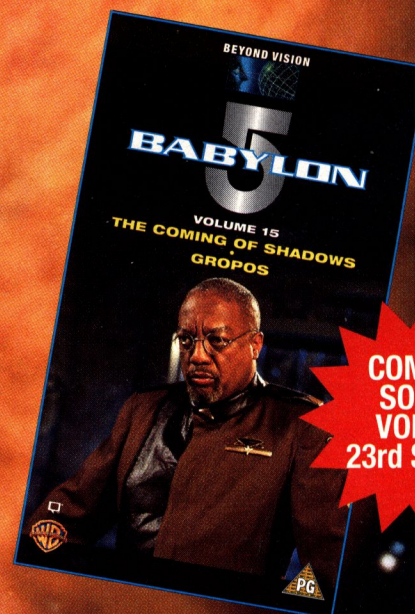
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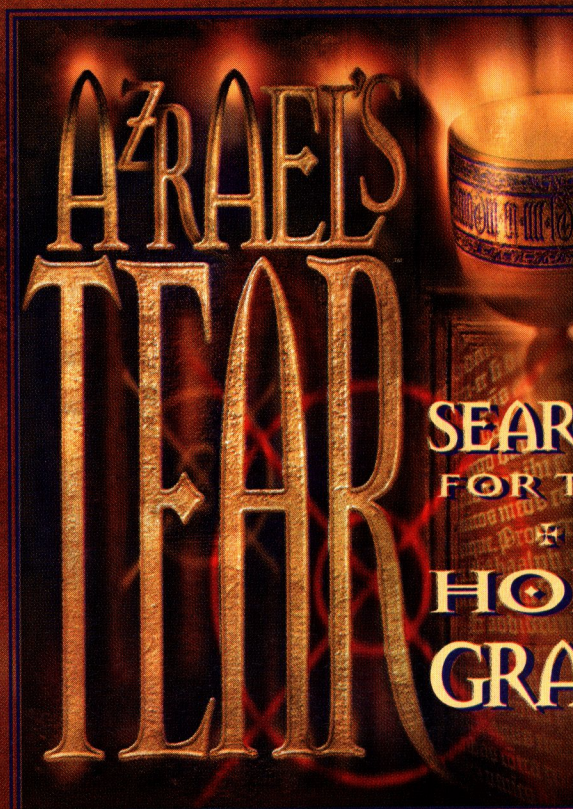
✦ Imaginative puzzles: complex and sophisticated puzzles are integrated into the environment and require imagination and skill to solve.

✦ Stunning high resolution 640x480 SVGA graphics for head up display.

✦ Realistic character dialogue: each character has its own history and personality.

✦ Challenging combat, an important component of the game, the player is advised to fight tactically to avoid being injured and wasting precious ammunition.

✦ Crystal clear digitised sound effects: superbly realistic audio effects and a variety of atmospheric music tracks enhance the game experience.



"If I were an MP I'd pass a law making this a required purchase."
5 out of 5 CD ROM Magazine

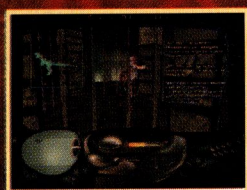
"Stunning Super VGA graphics tagged onto one of the best plots of the year make Azrael's Tear one of the most eagerly awaited RPGs for a while." - PC Power

"It's pretty damned impressive Azrael's Tear looks like a winner, trust me." - PC Review

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A MINDSCAPE PRODUCTION



Network Q RAC Rally Championship

IN PRODUCTION

Duncan MacDonald doesn't have *net* curtains over his windows and he has an aversion to *work*. He always joins the wrong *queue* in supermarkets and has never belonged to the *RAC*. His aunt Cath has an annoying accent and pronounces 'really' as *rally*, and he once came ninth in the chess *championship* at school. So who better to preview *Net/work Q RAC Rally Championship*? (*Appalling intro! Great! – Ed.*)

SNOOZE... AS A TELEVISUAL EVENT, rally driving is boring. Watching a car compete against a clock is *not* in the least bit exciting, and there aren't nearly enough crashes. The BBC tries to trick us into thinking otherwise by ending all their rally reports with 'exciting highlights'.

"Blimey," you might say, if you happened to tune in to a rally at exactly this closing moment: a crash, another crash, a spin, a blown tyre, another crash, wow! And so it goes on... and on.

And then the BBC2 link-man adds: "Tune in on Thursday for the third leg of the event, which is on an even more dangerous course!" And so you do tune in on Thursday. You even phone a friend just before it starts and say, "Are you watching the rallying? No? BBC2. Yes. Quick then. No, it's going to be good, really. Yes. Yes, really – I saw a bit of it on Monday and there were loads of

crashes. No, I don't think so, but the bloke said the course they're racing on tonight is really, really dangerous! Someone might die! Okay, see you later!"

Then the programme begins. It's

(Right and below) Graphical detail is excellent, and yet whatever view you choose, the frame rate doesn't suffer.



Sad bastard...

This next bit deserves ridicule I know, but years and years ago, my mum had a vile-looking lime green Toyota Starlet. The good thing about it, though, was that it was



introduced by Tony Mason – y'know, the short fat chap from *Top Gear*. He's wearing the obligatory anorak. Everyone standing behind him in the crowd is wearing an anorak as well. You notice that several of them have stopwatches too, but all this early-warning information somehow fails to filter through to the 'alarm' part of your brain.

Tony then interviews some of the drivers, most of whom appear to be Finnish. You think this is excellent: doubtless they'll all be alcoholics, driven to the edge of insanity by growing up in a land where the sun slips beyond the horizon at 2.30 in the afternoon. Then the racing starts. You sit there for one and a half hours. No crashes, not even a cracked windscreen. The programme ends and the credits roll, along with the compilation of accidents you saw the other evening. Exactly the same ones, obviously taken from some obscure 'rally crashes' section of the BBC video vault. You realise you've been 'had'.

Your phone rings. It's the chum you called earlier, who tells you there's a really exciting edition of *The Waltons* coming up on Sunday. Laughing derisively, he abruptly hangs up. Poo!





surprisingly nippy and responsive. After a while I became pretty 'adept' at winging it into positions small 'shopping hatchbacks' aren't really supposed to be able to handle...

"Mum, do you mind if I borrow your car for 20 minutes or so? I just need to pop to Safeways."

"Okay, but put some petrol in."

Half an hour later and I'd have picked up my 'co-driver' and we'd be airborne somewhere in the country lanes.

"Yaaaargh..."

"Don't worry, I know this stretch like the back of my hand!"

"Look out!!!"

(Above) Six cars on offer – just try not to get lumbered with the Proton (bleugh!).

Screech, thump, boing, scrape... "Shit!"

"Don't look so worried, it was only the exhaust pipe, I didn't hit him."

"Look out!!!"

And so on. But while I reckon rallying is bloody boring to watch, I also know how brilliant it is in practice* (see footnote on previous page). In other words it's perfect fare for a computer game.

Sega Rally is God?

In these days of low-priced super-consoles I reckon it's okay for me to make cross-format game comparisons. (Besides, if I were to compare *Network Q* to any other rally games available only on the PC it'd be a one-horse race... and this preview would become a fawning session.)

So back to *Sega Rally* on the Saturn – which is brilliant, obviously. But I've played it to death now, and have become decidedly picky as a result. Only four tracks, only three cars, only one weather condition (sunny – pah!). So over to *Network Q* RAC. Here are some facts and figures...

(1) Multiple weather conditions. Rain, snow, fog, day or night. These bring about the need for windscreen wipers and lights.

(2) 28 tracks. Or should I say 28 'stages', which are mapped from the official real-life RAC stage maps. They're not pretend loops. Can I repeat the number by the way? (28! Yus!)

(3) Six cars, each with the option to change tyres, gear ratios, brake bias and suspension characteristics. The cars are the Subaru Impreza Turbo, Escort



Cosworth, Renault Megane, Golf GTI 16v, Skoda Felicia 2WD and last (and least) the Proton 2.0i 16v.

(4) An arcade 'cry-baby' mode and a full-blown realistic ninja fuck-off increasing damage come-and-have-a-go-if-you-think-you're-hard-enough mode (including rolls and flips and stuff).

(5) Rather splendid sonics, sampled from the real cars.

(6) An eight-player network link-up which (so I've been told) will see you all starting simultaneously 'on a grid' and in which (again I've been told) all the cars will have rear-view mirrors.

(7) Modem support. And there's plenty more, but wait for the review.

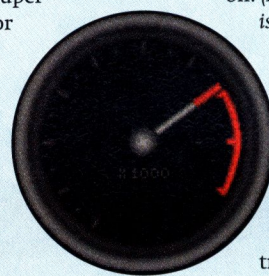
Final thoughts

Graphically, *Network Q* doesn't have quite the level of trackside detail found on *Sega Rally*, but it's fairly close. Out of the weather effects, the only one implemented when I had a go was night-time. And it looks seriously groove-tastic. Your headlights light up the area in front of your car just as if they were, er, headlights or something. How can I put this? Um, it's like driving very fast at night with, erm, headlights

on. (I think what he's trying to say is that it's quite realistic – Ed.)

One thing that surprised me about *Network Q* was the fact that every time you go to the car select screen, the Escort Cosworth is ready and available. Do what? I thought Europress were trying to make this game

realistic. If you tried to select the Cosworth in the real world, five times out of ten you'd get the message, "Sorry, the Cossie has been nicked by joyriders. Please select a different vehicle." Oh well, they can't think of everything I suppose, and if I were you, I'd keep your eyes peeled for the review of *Network Q* regardless of this glaring omission – this game really does look like it's shaping up into a right corker. **Z**



(Left and below) *Network Rally* promises to be a real white-knuckle ride with the option to change tyres, gear ratios, suspension... And you won't need petrol.



Product details

Developer: Magnetic Fields

Publisher: Europress

Telephone: 01625 859333

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: October 1996

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DOS &


Orion Burger is a gigantic cartoon point 'n' clicker, with a *Groundhog Day* scenario. Duncan MacDonald checks it out. Orion Burger is a gigantic cartoon point 'n' clicker, with a *Groundhog Day* scenario. Duncan MacDonald checks it out. Orion Burger is a gigantic cartoon point 'n' clicker, with a *Groundhog Day* scenario. Duncan MacDonald checks it (...Snip. I think they get the 'joke' by now - Ed.).

Orion Burger



(Above) A scene from the rolling intro, but it'd take me a million years to explain what's happening - so I won't.

(Above right) No doubt one of Wilbur's tests from the game. Your guess as to what the test is will be as good as mine.

(Below) Wilbur, as you can see, looks a bit like a character out of *Scooby Doo*. He also sounds like one.

(Below right) To be wankily reverent for a mo, the graphics - as you'll have noticed - are really rather fab.

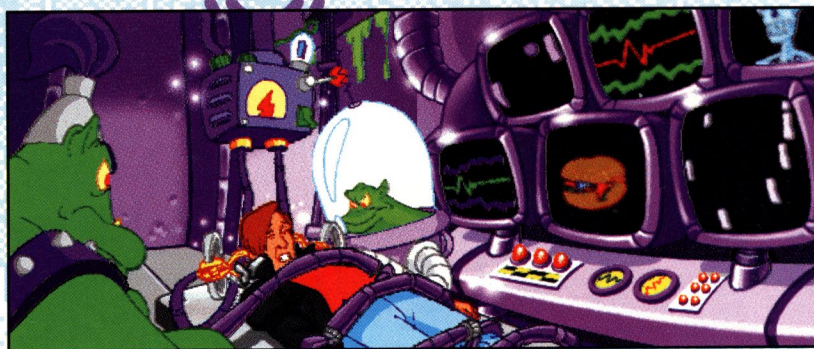
(Below far right) Wilbur framed by two aliens with a wooshy, trippy backdrop from the '60s.

I WON'T WASTE ANY TIME WAFFLING, and I'll give you the gist of the Orion Burger storyline by quoting pretty much directly from the press release - it does a succinct enough job, so why try fixing what ain't broke?

"Alien reps from the Intergalactic Orion Burger Corporation are scouring the universe, ready to make mincemeat of any unintelligent life forms they stumble upon. Only the clever races survive, and you - playing a geezer called Wilbur - are the guinea pig for the whole of humankind.

You will have to endure a bizarre battery of puzzles that will scrutinise aspects of your intelligence. You will be expected to learn an alien language. Your neuro-synaptic bandwidth will be tested - in other words, can you work out how to conduct 100,000 volts of electricity with your head? And more, much more.

But fear not. If you fail these tests you will be spared from death only to return to the gaming arena in a *Groundhog Day* scenario, where you'll relive your experiences... with any new skills you've picked up going back with you, opening the game up yet further."



End of copycat bit...

So there's the gist. You start the game off on Earth, where there's a whole point-and-click adventure going on already. Then the aliens zap you off to a weird and wonderful location, where you're given specific problems to solve: an intelligence test, in other words. Pass or fail and you get sent back to earth, armed with the new skills your character picked up. On and on. Get zapped up to aliensville. On and on. Back to earth. On and on. Aliensville, earth, aliensville, earth. And so forth.

Apparently Orion Burger does what games such as *Lure Of The Temptress* attempted to do, insofar as shit happens even if you're not actually around to witness it. (Or events aren't purely 'location driven', if you want it worded poncily.) For instance, there's a bank robbery occurring in the Earth part of the game which happens every day in the same location and at the same time (*Groundhog Day*, don't forget). The first time you play, you may well be in one of the other hundred or so locations, and will therefore miss it completely. When you do eventually find out about it, (through a newspaper story or something), you can make sure that you are there the next time.

From the blurb I read about Orion Burger, it really does sound as if the game could be onto a winning formula - the designers have gone (they say) to great lengths to avoid any 'frustrations' on the part of the player. You know those adventures where you have to plough through nine zillion locations to collect 'the chocolate bar' you forgot to get earlier? Well, apparently that sort of stuff simply doesn't happen. Oh, and here's something to bear in mind: the writer of Orion Burger wrote the scripts for oodles of episodes of *Star Trek: Next Generation*. (Exactly which ones I can't tell you, but it augers well, surely. Mind you, he also wrote the scripts for a large number of episodes of *Charlie's Angels*, which sort of evens things out a bit.)

The PC Zone Blueprint 'competition'...

On the preview CD I was given - along with all the usual biog stuff on the designers and programmers - there was a tiny playable portion of the game itself. It's one of the later intelligence tests, in which the aliens have shrunk you to femto-scopic proportions and hurled you into a gerbil cage. This wee part of the game is only three screens big, and you only have three items in



PRODUCTION

Product details

Developer: Sanctuary Woods

Publisher: EIDOS/US Gold

Telephone: 0121-625 3388

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: October

your inventory, so you'd think the objective - to escape from the cage - would be a doddle. But no. It's a nightmare. Chris (Features Ed) and I tried everything we could think of until our brains exploded, and got nowhere.

So: reckon you're hard enough to get further? Then study the screens in question, and have a squiz at what we tried. Did we miss anything?

If you think you've sussed it, send your solution to "You Thick Couple Of Tossers Compo" at the usual PC Zone address. Or e-mail it. The sender of the first correct solution will win my very own TV remote control unit. "That's a shit prize" you may be thinking. And on the surface of things I agree, but look at it this way... while you're in possession of my zapper, every time I want to change channel or turn the volume up or down, I'll have to bloody get up and do it manually. (You bastards! Send it back!) (They haven't won it yet - Ed.)

Things we've already tried...

Using the hamster-wheel obviously powers the magnet and opens the door, but step off the wheel and the door closes. (Slippery kibble will not allow you to slide to the door before it shuts.) The tights don't seem to interact with anything. Ditto the peanuts, carrot pieces, apple core and bottle top, but maybe you know better. You can shoot the water dish: water then pours from it and goes down the hole, but why, or what for, sod knows.

Using the gun on the ice releases the grasshoppers, which then leap about all over the shop (they serve to muck up the Robo Rodents' aim momentarily - seemingly giving you time to do something else, but quite what we're not sure). You can't reach the magnet or the generator (or we don't think you can). You can release the Robo Rodents by either 'using' the wood chippings or by zapping (the wood chippings catch fire in the case of the latter). And, er, that's about it. Good luck! z



(Right) All together - He's got the whole world above his head!



"You Thick Couple of Tossers" compo

If you've noticed something 'weird' about the middle frame, well done. It's hand drawn, as we had difficulties grabbing it!

TOP FLOOR

Downy tube to middle floor

Hidden behind the wood chippings are three sleeping 'Robo Rodents' who will gun you down if aroused, but who may, we strongly suspect, be instrumental in your eventual release



Downy tube to middle and ground floors

Apple core

Bottle top

MIDDLE FLOOR

Uppy tube to top floor

Water

Downy tube to ground floor



Uppy/downy tube

Water dish

Chewed carrot

GROUND FLOOR

Uppy tube to middle floor

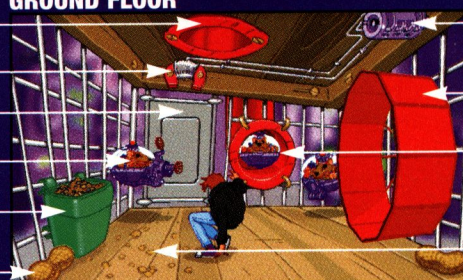
Magnet

Door

Robo Rodent in gerbmobile

Kibble dish full of kibble*

Peanut



Generator

Exercise wheel

Uppy tube to middle and top floors

Bits of kibble

Several grasshoppers enclosed in ice

Laser gun

INVENTORY

CAGE FLOOR

Pick-up command

Use command

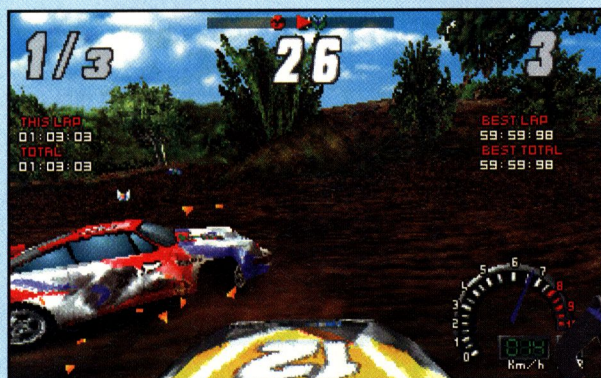
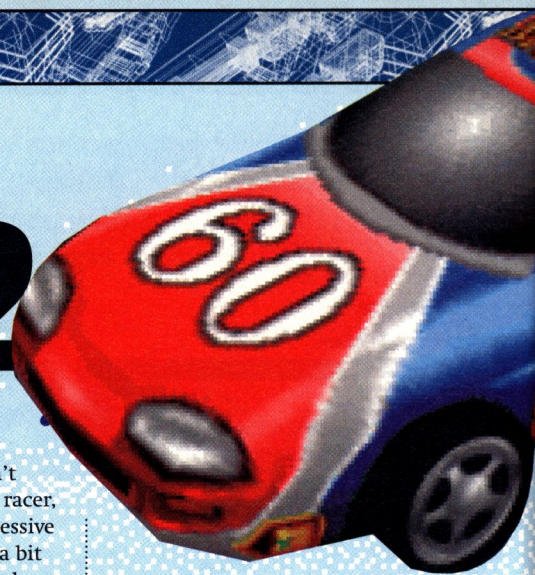
Pair of tights



(Left) Loads of greenTV screens and what looks like a generator. Or something.

* Kibble is gerbil food (maybe you knew that, but I didn't). You can add to your inventory by taking handfuls of kibble from the tray, and it may or may not be worth knowing that when you place kibble on the floor, you create a 'slippery area'.

Screamer 2



When Patrick 'get outta my damn way' McCarthy gets behind the wheel of *Screamer 2*, even the pavements ain't safe, and our advice would be that you stay indoors. Someone get the keys off him, for god's sake.

(Above) There are a number of different views – all suitably *Sega Rally* in style.

I REMEMBER WHEN A SPORTS CAR used to sound like a sports car as soon as its name started to roll off your tongue. Ferrari... Lamborghini... From the first syllable people were already impressed (unless you had one of those old three-wheeled Lambo Reliants, of course) and were already jealously thinking, "Wow! He must be really well endowed in the trouser department."

Today however, things just aren't the same. Play the average arcade racer, jam-packed with supposedly impressive chunks of machinery, and it's all a bit mundane. If you owned the logbook of one of these motoring babies, you'd have to identify the model before anyone showed even the slightest bit of interest – and that's assuming they knew what you were talking about.

Alright, so everyone knows what a Porsche is (even if they don't know how to pronounce it), but you'd hardly get them glancing towards your crotch area when you announced that you had a Mazda, would you? Or a Honda, for that matter. You'd have to say, "I've got a Mazda."

No wait, don't go – it's got an X on the end of its name," before they cottoned on that it was supposed to be fast. You might even have to gesture vaguely in the direction of your pouchette to emphasise the point. And if you have to do that, you might just as well spend the money on some cosmetic enlargement and be done with it.

Nevertheless, *Screamer's* back, with the same old anonymous-sounding cars that travel very fast. In fact, thanks to an improved game engine it looks as if they'll be running at a greater rate of rpm than in the first version – which

as we all know, was faster than an Irish swimmer after a few courses of expert coaching from a discus thrower. But this isn't just a re-hash: where the first one was an attempt at *Ridge Racer* for the PC, this one will be trying to go one better and be the new *Sega Rally*. More effort has gone into the handling, so the cars have more in common with those in Sega's effort: they slide better, and all the various set-ups handle differently too.

A little bit of this...

The designers have taken a little bit from this game and a little from that to come up with a set of options that could easily hail from any of the top PSX arcade racers. There's the usual arcade mode and a championship that can be competed for over four, five or six tracks; a time trial option, including the chance to race against a 'ghost car' (which sounds like you might need to get the rubber underwear out unless, like us, you never take it off) or give an opponent a headstart in *Sega Rally* style. And there's a multi-player network mode and a split-screen option for human-opponent fun.



Course you can, Malcolm

Here's a brief rundown of what you can look forward to in each of the six different courses.

ENGLAND

Race around Old London Town, under Tower Bridge and over the Cheddar Gorge, avoiding the Cocknernee barrowboys who will try to wipe your windscreen with a pair of stained brown nylon Y-fronts in return for a fiver, while issuing physical threats to anyone who has the nerve to hold you up by driving at a lesser pace.

EGYPT

The desert level for aficionados to slide about in a *Sega Rally* stylee. Skirt round the camel droppings and, without getting sand beneath your eyelids, race through the packed Arab market, running goats over, laughing at the two-headed radioactive camel and knocking down stallholders until you're neck-deep in perishable goods.

FINLAND

The snowy level, complete with realistic white frozen stuff: dodge the alcoholics lying speed-ramp fashion across the road; score bonus points for clipping the Christians on bicycles (Yus!); keep a fire and a bucket of water in the back seat, and jump out occasionally to plunge into icy water; write off your car in a head-on collision with an elk.

COLUMBIA

Another snowy level, but of a different kind. Deliver packages of cocaine to drug cartels deep in the mountains, navigating winding roads and a rope bridge; shoot your gun out the window at random, especially if you're anywhere near a football ground; end up skint and dead in a hotel room with one nostril (bet you didn't even know hotels *had* nostrils).

SWITZERLAND

Care must be taken not to fall asleep at the wheel.

CALIFORNIA

The easiest level, partly because everyone else insists on driving at 55mph with cruise control engaged. Jump Golden Gate Bridge; surf along Sunset Strip; wave at the President and his latest floosie; enjoy the stunning views and wide open spaces of Compton and Watts; mow down anyone without a Gold AmEx card; join the National Rifle Association; hang loose.





Product details

Developer: Milestone
Publisher: Virgin
Telephone: 0171-368 2255
Format: CD-ROM
Release date: November

With perhaps a slight nod towards *Wipeout*, you can now choose to drive for one of four teams, each embellished with their own little logo. Sadly, they haven't been designed by anyone famous so they're not quite as stylish as those in *Wipeout*, and whichever team you plump for you still have the same cars. But the thought's there, I think.

There are more courses for you to zoom about on, each set in a different country and here you'll find conclusive proof that California considers itself a separate country from the rest of the US - either that or Americans think that every other country in the world is uniformly similar throughout, and that only their's has different bits. I can't decide. Although only three countries had been completed in the version we saw, they will apparently incorporate different racing conditions and even different weather. Sunshine in California no doubt - which'll be a bit of a bugger to contend with, I'm sure. There's not really much more to reveal just yet, except that there'll be a demo on our cover CD soon for you to have a go with. So piss off out and play - what's a pasty individual like you doing indoors on a nice day like this anyway? **Z**

(Above) The tracks are all beautifully drawn and can be displayed in 16-bit colour mode - that's 65,000 (count 'em!) options.

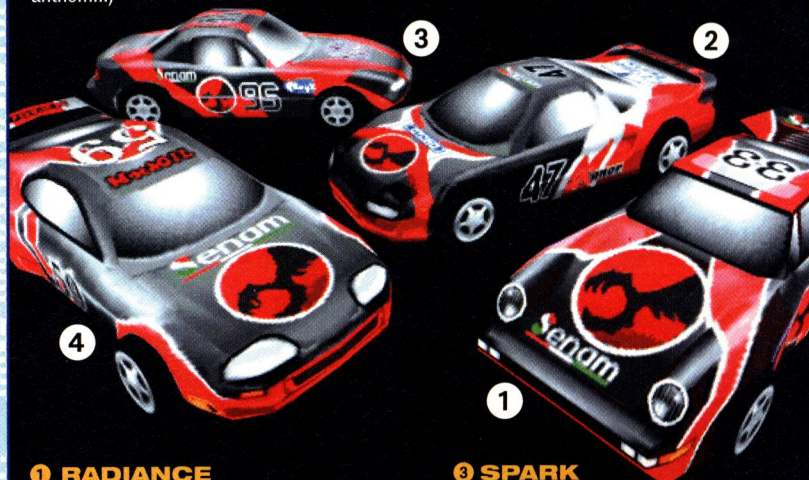
(Below) The tracks have all been designed to be super-slidey and *Sega Rally*-like.



Them car things

The cars in *Screamer* can't be called by their proper real-life names, presumably because the developers would have to cough up the equivalent of the Brazilian National Debt to use them. So they've given them alternative ones instead. Unfortunately, rather than going for the racey blood-stirring monikers you'd usually associate with high-speed thrills and spills, they've opted for the type of name usually given by drug-addled hippies to their soon to be embarrassed offspring, dog or vacuum cleaner. Here they all are anyway, in all their poncily-named glory. And just so you can be truly impressed, we've even told you what their metal real-life counterparts are, extra initials and all. Each handle differently depending on whether they're front, rear, or four-wheel drive.

It's worth noting that in games such as this the growing trend is to calculate speeds in kilometres-per-hour. This is purely because it sounds faster than the old-fashioned British miles-per-hour, and since nobody can work out how to convert it, gullible consumers are all the more impressed. We have several mathematical experts on the firm however, and they have devised a foolproof formula to convert these speeds so that we can record them in mph. Their computations are accurate to point zero zero one of a decimal point (except that we don't believe in decimal points). Yet another triumph for plucky ol' Blighty over the despots of Europe who refuse to eat our disease-raddled meat by-products! (Cue national anthem...)



1 RADIANCE

The Radiance is a rear-wheel drive car, which means that the back slides out on corners as if its tyres were made of highly polished aluminium, and life becomes an extended power slide. In reality it's known as the Porsche 911, which used to be popular with property speculators in the 1980s but can now be had for a fiver or so from bankruptcy auctions. Its top speed is 210kph, which in our foolproof calculations works out as 165mph.

2 NEBULA

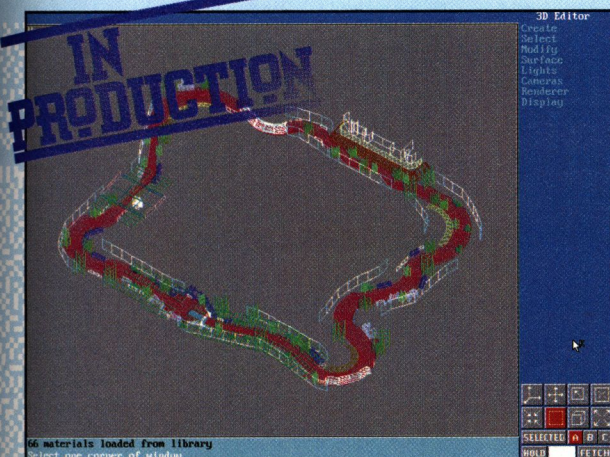
The Nebula is another rear-wheel drive number and again, you'll find you develop a crick in your neck from looking over your shoulder while travelling around the world sideways. I don't know why they don't just put the wheels and seats on at an angle of 45 degrees and be done with it. In real life it's the Honda NSX (with the X standing for 'fast', of course) and its top speed is 220kph, which converts in our adjust-a-tron, as... er, well, it looks like 348mph (as it says here).

3 SPARK

A lovely little motor, handy around town and something you might consider as a second family car, but only for the wife if she's a top rally driver with cobra-like reflexes and a complete absence of fear particles in her body. Because it's front-wheel drive, the front wheels behave like they're on a mission to collide with anything resembling your actual vehicle of choice. In real life it's a Mazda MX5 and can manage an astonishing 240kph, which translates as... er, 57mph. (Are we sure about this formula?)

4 HORIZON

The Horizon provides full on four-wheel-drive action, but it's not a Jeep so you can't cruise the high street with massive bullbars welded on the front, bumping into and wrecking other people's cars like a twat. But you can drive fast over tricky surfaces like sand, snow and camel crap. It's a Toyota Supra, which hasn't got an X but still hits a top speed of 230kph, which our ever-reliable formula translates as 'slightly less than the speed of light'.



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Shattered Steel

Patrick McCarthy once watched David Steel compete in the Tour de France on a child's tricycle. This made him the ideal person to preview a game that... er, has nothing to do with cycling.

ARE YOU EASILY CONFUSED? DO you have trouble remembering the difference between games? Everyone around here does, to the extent where we often find ourselves giving completely inaccurate opinions on games at social occasions, thus ruining any kudos we had before we opened our mouths. We've found that making up a little rhyme helps us to remember. (For example, "We don't really care much for *Chaos Control*; it's like having a steam shovel jammed up your hole.") But it's far from foolproof, especially if like Andrew Lloyd-Webber you have no head for rhymes.

This becomes all the more important when there are two games which are in the same genre and have distinctly similar names – like *Metaltech: Earthsiege 2* and *MechWarrior 2*, the two big releases in the Mech game stakes, for example. Off the top of your head, can you remember which one has the great landscapes, robots that fall over to good effect when you shoot their legs and that extremely difficult career mode – and which has the large cityscapes with proper buildings and robots that still walk about quite happily when you blast their leg off? No? Then buy the back issues and find out, joik.

Are you ready to trundle?

Shattered Steel, the latest entrant in the Trundling About In Enormous Robots, Shooting The Shit Out Of Everything



genre popular with so many insecure short-arses, will be a welcome addition, if only because it isn't called *Mech Siege Warrior Too*. Any imagination in game titling is to be welcomed – if only they'd applied the same innovation to the plot we'd be laughing. It's the usual alien worlds stuff. Wouldn't it



be refreshing if you got to pilot your five-hundred ton megabastard robot around a shopping centre, using your vast array of weaponry to annihilate anyone with ginger hair, anyone under five feet six, and definitely anyone in an acrylic sweater. But it's nothing like that. Oh hum, here's the plot anyway...

The plot

It's 2132, and... please can I do the half-past nine joke again? (*Certainly not* – Ed.) Damn. Alright, it's 2132. Deep space exploration and colonisation (the futuristic equivalent of colonic

irrigation) have become a reality. That's what it says here, anyway. But the universe has split into two distinct social sets: first there are the goodies who are only chugging about the place in order to collect interesting fossils for publication in tabloid newspapers back home and teach the meaning of 'life'



to sexy alien love goddesses. And then there are the baddies, whose only pursuit is to line their own pockets, trade shiny beads with gullible natives in return for entire planets, and get the aforementioned love goddesses 'with child'. If anyone, good or bad, wants to survive in these far-off places, they need

(Above) Top-notch graphics, three planets, 50 missions, 50 species of alien to do battle with, and sexy love goddesses too.



to collect elements. Not the sort you get in two-bar electric fires, but the sort of elements you get under the ground and whose names you failed to commit to memory in chemistry lessons.

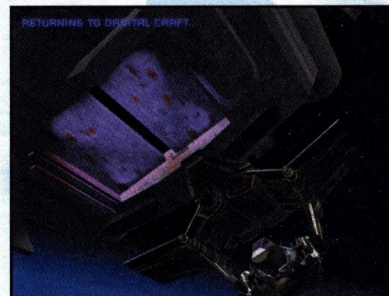
And you are?

You are a mercenary, hired by a large mining company to investigate the breakdown of communications protocols at a mining camp on Lanios 3 (future-talk for 'the phone's off the hook'). At first, this breakdown is thought to have been caused by another pesky raid by the baddie types with the shiny beads and no condoms. Instead, you discover a strange alien race which is intent on destroying all human installations and, while they're about it, all humans – especially short ones with ginger hair and acrylic jumpers (maybe we weren't far out with our wish-list earlier).

It turns out that the phone isn't just off the hook, but the whole phone booth is in pieces all over the road. This means that you are unable to phone back to base for a little help, and they can't get in touch with you either. Why? Well, while deep space exploration has become a reality, the development of a battery powerful enough to operate a mobile phone in deep space has not. In other words, you're on your own in there, buddy boy.

Spontaneous mission

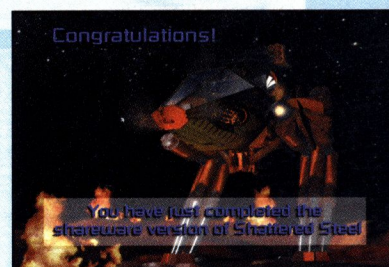
So, not exactly a brand new departure in the plot stakes. But it might just make you sit up and take notice when you see the in-game graphics – they look pretty damned top-notch, using Voxel technology to turn everything all bright and shiny and lovely looking – until you blow them up and spoil all



those hours of elbow work and car polish (or whatever the hell Voxel is). There are more than 50 missions in the game, set on any one of three planets – which gives the artists all the excuses they need to let their imagination run riot on the background with... er, unusual shaped trees and plants that you could send to Esther Rantzen if she was still alive. (Is she dead then? – Ed.) Alright, it was wishful thinking.

The different locations mean that you also get to find out how more than 50 different alien species react to having your robotic fingers jammed up their noses and their legs blown off. There are 30 different weapons with which to wreak havoc, including heat-seeking missiles and 'smart' rockets, and more than 50 different enemy alien craft to try and demolish, including assault choppers with fully-working searchlights (and crikey, gripping hands too). And there's a specially developed artificial intelligence system so that the aliens will know, for example, that rather than waiting until you're in your gigantic robot thing and ready for them, it's better to sneak round behind you when you're reading the paper on the tube on the way to work and cosh you with a billiard ball in a sock.

Well, alright, *Shattered Steel* doesn't take it quite that far. But if you want to know more, you can do one of two things: be patient until we give it a full review next month, or have a crack at the demo mission on the cover disk. If you feel you could easily live without it and are regretting even reading this much about a game you have no interest in whatsoever... er... sorry. **Z**



Product details

Developer: BioWare Corp/Pyrotek Game Studios

Publisher: Interplay

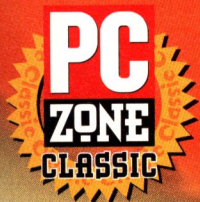
Telephone: 01628 423666

Format: CD-ROM

Release date: October

THE BITMAP BROTHERS

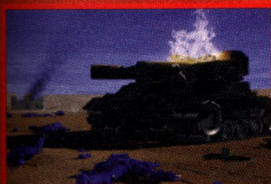
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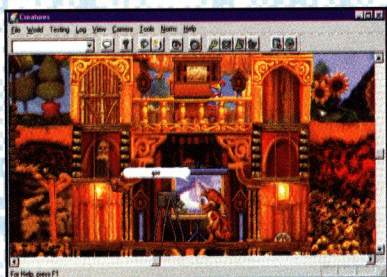


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Creatures

This revolutionary new game from Millennium Interactive lets you breed live creatures on your desktop. **Charlie Brooker's** been breeding live creatures in his underwear for the last six months. This made him the ideal choice for blah blah blah...

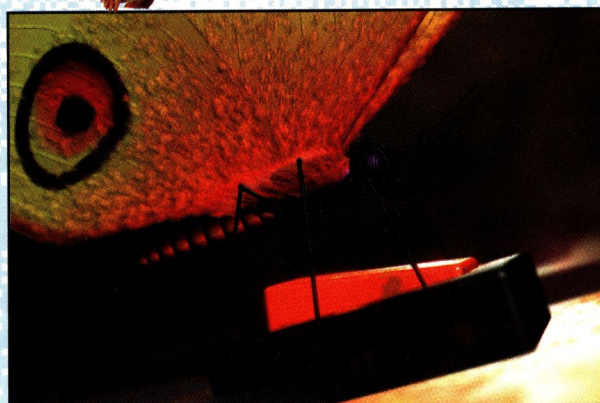


CAST YOUR MIND BACK A NUMBER of years and you may remember Bruce Forsyth singing, "Life... is the name of the game." Had he known just how prophetic his words would prove to be, he'd probably have dumped the quiz shows and carpet ads in favour of a career in soothsaying; sort of like Mystic Meg, only ganglier and with a more obvious wig. And a bloody big chin. Because thanks to Millennium Interactive, we really *are* in a position to have a crack at 'Life: the Computer Game'. Or *Creatures*, to give it its proper name. Now before we press on, you might want to sit down. Things are about to get a little bit scary.

Ahem. So, anyone for a quick round of *Artificial Life*? Eh? Fancy a bit of that, do you? How does a game featuring characters with their own *fully-functioning DNA structure* grab you? Yeah? A game where you raise, breed, teach and communicate with an entire race of *digital beings*? Ones that are capable of *independent thought*? Eh? Eh? Fancy some, eh? Caaarm on then! Caaaaaarm on!

Life should mean life

Whether or not *Creatures* proves to be one of the most entertaining PC games of 1996 has yet to be seen, but it's already one of the most fascinating. You may have seen it mentioned in the national press recently and – let's face it – you can't say *that* about many games.



(Above) A butterfly inadvertently landing on the nuclear button.

(Above left) The wonderful world of *Creatures*.

Its basic premise is simple enough: your 'task' (such as it is) is to raise some live creatures, allow them to breed, and then raise and breed the resultant generations in the same manner. Fairly original, I'm sure you'll agree. But the main twist with *Creatures* is that the 'creatures' within it are fully-working examples of 'artificial life' (or 'CyberLife' as the designers insist on calling it). Intrigued? Sit back in that chair, make yourself comfortable and I'll explain a few slightly complicated things: concepts that you'll need to digest in order to fully appreciate just how danged *clever* this program is. Let's start by defining 'artificial life' a little more clearly.

We've all got a good idea of what 'artificial intelligence' is, but in case you don't, it refers to those decision-making routines used by games such as *Command & Conquer* in order to ensure that your attacking forces take the longest, most dangerous route through the simplest of landscapes, and get annoyingly 'stuck' behind trees or hedgerows. Artificial life is something quite different. Rather than simulating a

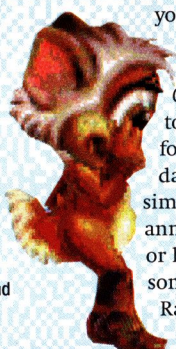
thinking brain, it simulates the physical life form attached to it. It creates a digital approximation of a biological system, and the instincts which drive it. The creatures, for instance, will experience hunger if they go without food, and if they don't find any, they will eventually die. Aside from rumbling stomachs, they can also experience tiredness, boredom, happiness, and – *naturellement* – the sexual impulse. Got that? Good. On to 'neural nets', then.

Neural nets sound scary and complicated, but the core concept is fairly simple: it's basically a trial and error learning system. For example, when initially hatched, one of the wee beasties' primary instincts is to pick things up and put them in their mouths.

Eventually, they'll try this out with something edible (such as a carrot), and discover that it stops them feeling hungry. Were it not for the wonder of neural nets, they'd probably carry on trying to stuff any old thing down their gobs. As it is, they 'learn' to associate carrots with quelling hunger. This trial and error style of learning goes across the board – they learn to 'enjoy' all kinds of stimuli, from playing with balls to looking at fish swimming past. You can even teach them simple words and phrases, and then actually communicate with them. Spooky, eh?

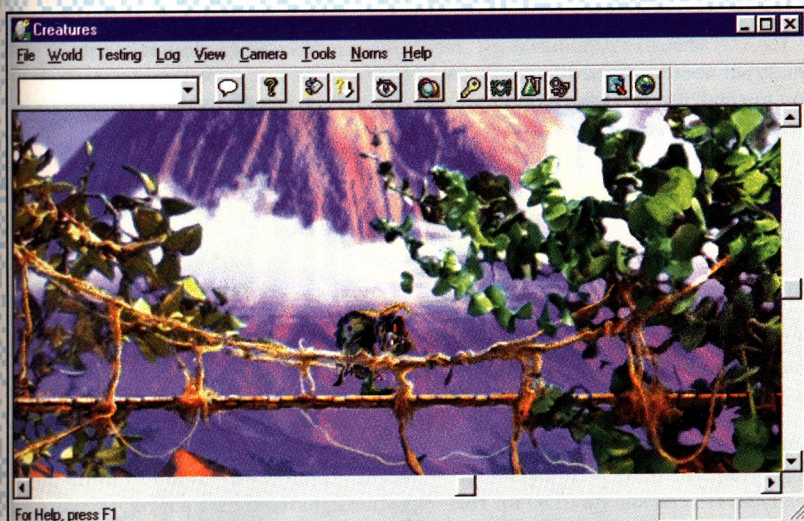
The generation game

Just as in nature, each of the little *Creatures* critters has many of its physical and intellectual properties defined by its genetic code. Millennium



(Below) Here's the 'playing area' in all its glory. Note the pretty watery bits and the cable car. Cool.





call their version of this code 'digital DNA'. It's a simplified rendition of a natural phenomenon, and is crucial to simulate the breeding process effectively. If, for instance, you take a greedy creature, and breed it with a talkative but stupid one, the resultant offspring's DNA will be formed from a combination of its parents' codes - leaving you with a fat bastard who talks bollocks (Russell Grant, in other words). It's also possible to, say, breed two violent parents together, and end up with an *incredibly* violent child. Breed two more of these incredibly violent offspring, and you've got a gang of furry Jeffrey Dahmers.

And so on. Since each creature has a limited life span (around 40 hours), it's essential to get them to reproduce - and because the kids inherit some of their parents' characteristics, the game should develop and become more interesting the longer you play it.

There's loads and loads more 'braniac' stuff at work here, but I don't want to give you the wrong impression. *Creatures* is not a white lab-coat of a game. You don't need a degree to play it. No no no. Sensibly, it's all been designed with Joe Public in mind, which means A) lots of very cute graphics, and B) an easy to use interface. Your fluffy protégés inhabit a lovingly-drawn on-screen 'world' that's jam-packed with fun stuff for them to piddle about with (from footballs to cable cars), as well as an evil race of 'Grendels', whose sole purpose in life is to pass diseases on to your virtual chums and generally make life difficult.

Having seen *Creatures* in action, the eerily realistic behaviour of the little creatures left me with something approaching a sense of awe - and if you've ever installed something like PF Magic's *Dogz* or *Catz* and found yourself getting attached to your little desktop pet (even though you know it's stupid to do so), I think it's safe to say that you'll want to *marry* these little buggers.

Now I know that you may think I'm being foolhardy to say so at this stage, but if *Creatures* doesn't prove to be a runaway success with critics and public alike (in the same way that *Sim City 2000* was, only bigger), then I'll eat my hat. No, make that *two* hats. And great big ten-gallon ones at that. Still sceptical? Just you wait and see. **Z**



Bosom buddies

Just like dogs that learn to ride skateboards, or cats that can operate particle accelerators, the little critters that run around in *Creatures* are equally capable of exhibiting unexpected character traits. Toby Simpson, the game's producer, gave me an unsettling example of this.

They're not programmed to do it (they're not programmed to 'do' anything, really), but while testing the game, they discovered that some of the creatures were 'making friends'. For instance, two of them stood around in the 'garden' area and played 'catch' with a football, for ages. How come? Well, when they examined things a little more closely, the team realised that each of the two creatures had decided that while they 'enjoyed' throwing the ball around, they didn't enjoy having to go and fetch it afterwards. They'd settled upon a game of catch, since it meant maximum 'ball-throwing' action, and minimum 'fetching' tedium. They only had their own best interests at heart, in other words. Could this intrinsically selfish motivation be the basis for most human friendships? Probably. Think of all those albums and books you've lent out over the years and never got back. The bastards.

(Above left) Aww, look at the pweety wickle beasties.

(Left) One of the hateful Grendels. Face like a bag of chisels, mate.

Product details

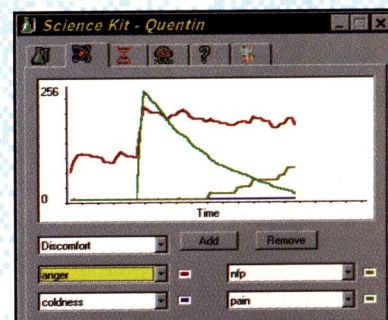
Developer: Millennium Interactive

Publisher: Time Warner

Contact: <http://www.cyberlife.co.uk>

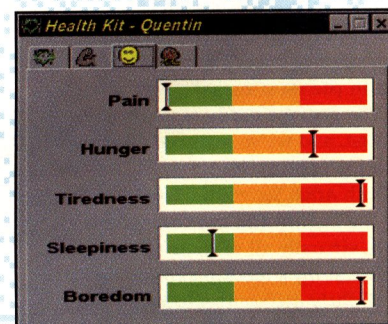
Format: CD-ROM

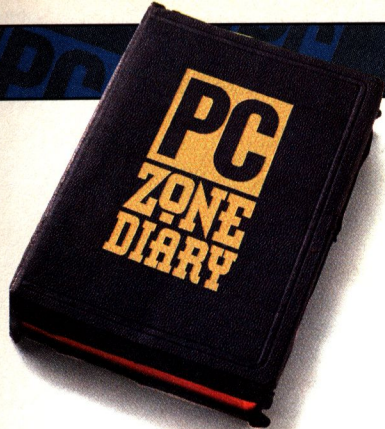
Release date: September



(Above right and right) With the Science Kit, you can check out every aspect of your creatures' development.

(Below) Make sure you teach 'em not to jump up and down when they're riding this thing. Don't want to find yourself peeling them off the floor, eh?





MDK Diary

Part 2



The development of MDK plods ever onwards... John Davison speaks to Shawn Nelson, the chap behind the animation.

IF YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING CLOSE TABS on the development of Shiny Entertainment's MDK, you'll no doubt be aware that as well as some seriously impressive polygon-based visuals, one of the technical features that really stands out is the fact that both the central character and many of the creatures that inhabit the lands of the game have been motion-captured to ensure that they look and act in the most realistic way possible.

The systems used are many and varied, and we've featured Gremlin's motion capture studio in PC Zone before – both *Actua Soccer* and *Euro 96* made use of the facility and the company is using it in virtually all of their forthcoming titles. Shiny's motion capture facility is slightly different (although fundamentally the same) and is handily known as MoCap. Shawn Nelson, the team's expert on the subject, talks us through the process and even draws a little cartoon for us too.

Okay, so you've got this 'MoCap' system. Do you understand every-thing about it, or is it just a tool? And do you have a techie-bod background, or are you more arty-farty?

(Left) At the beginning of each level our hero performs a kind of suicidal skydive.

After obtaining a Bachelor's degree in sculpture at the San Francisco Academy of Arts, I went to the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia for a year. From there, I was drafted to the University of Southern California where I got a Master's degree in computer animation.

Oh. What about normal life stuff? Are you normal? Do you have a life?

I collect toys, especially the Spawn line-up and enjoy cartoons like *The Tick*. I don't always watch *Star Trek* but I know all the characters by heart. I love boogie-boarding and soccer.

Do you have a videogame background?

I started playing videogames on a state of the art Atari vcs 2600 with *Missile Command* and *Gauntlet*. Next came a Sega Genesis, a Macintosh, an SGI and a PC.

Why use SGI? What's so hot about it apart from the hefty price tag? Is it really all it's cracked up to be for this sort of thing?

It's the only machine powerful enough to run the software that I need to use. I started with Softimage 2.5 and 3.0 and Power Animator 6.0. We're now using The Alias/Wavefront Power Animator 7.01.1 with a bunch of plug-ins like MS3 (Motion Sampler 3), Composer & Studio Paint 3D – so I decided to cancel my company Ferrari order and bought the \$135,000 set-up instead.

Is it easy to get machines like that

working? Is the system as simple as just sticking ping-pong balls all over someone's body and then hooking him up to an SGI box?

No way. I spent HOURS and HOURS and HOURS on the phone as I tried to get the calibration of our main character just perfect. Every time I thought it was right, our actor would put his hands on top of his head. Looking back at the screen, one arm might end up on the floor, the other might stick out of his mouth. It was so frustrating, but then suddenly it all worked, and the settings were perfect.

Dumbo question now for the people at the back... What is motion capture (exactly)?

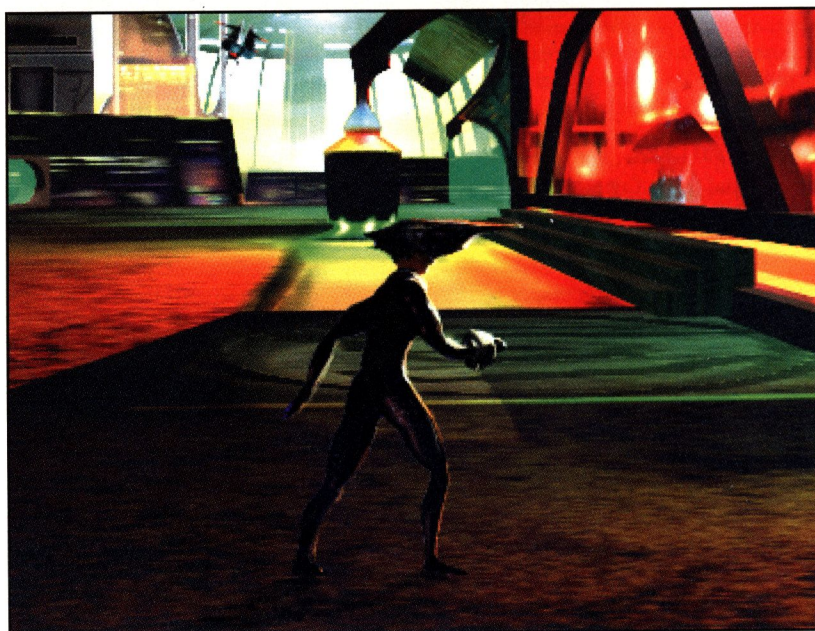
Motion capture is a system where you put sensors on an actor who then moves around within a projected magnetic field. The 3D point/space co-ordinate information is in turn translated to the data format required by your software – in other words, animating skeletons via joints that you then lay the skin of the final character onto. With motion capture you animate from the inside out.

What's good about it?

You can record hours of animation extremely quickly. If you do animation by hand with a pencil (like Disney), it takes years. The result is that we get much more movement than an artist

(Left) Initial sketches dictated the sorts of positions that the actor would have to get into.

(Right) The central character is a sprite – not polygons – and the motion-captured animation is silky smooth.



ever has time to draw. All the subtleties are there, the joints work like real joints and – most importantly – you can FEEL the weight of the character as he performs his moves.

...and the bad stuff?

Basically it restricts you to humans or animals. If you want to motion capture a shark, then you are in a world of hurt, literally. If you have a 20-legged monster that you need to do back flips, then you'd better hope you have a great pet store near your office. I suppose you could tie ten actors together...

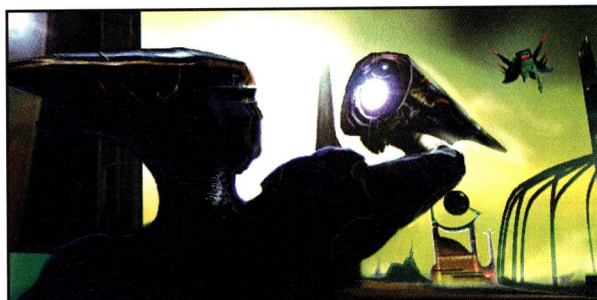
Besides all this, what restrictions are there?

Space is a big thing. I had to build a stage to cut down the magnetic interference from the steel bars in our concrete floor; that coupled with

the cables tying the actor to the main computer restricts his movement, big-time. It hurts the actor if he does a dive and lands on the umbilical cable link, but I don't care about that!

How many frames per second do you get with motion capture?

A conventional motion capture system uses up to 16 sensors, but we only used 11. Polhemus, who makes the MoCap system, says it's supposed to record at 50 frames per second but it only does 48. The silly part is that the Alias software can't take more than 30 frames per second. Although the data is sharper due to the 48 frames per second, we can't read it all. From that point on we give our data to Andy (programming bloke, see last month's issue of PC Zone) so that he can work all of his wonderful programming magic.

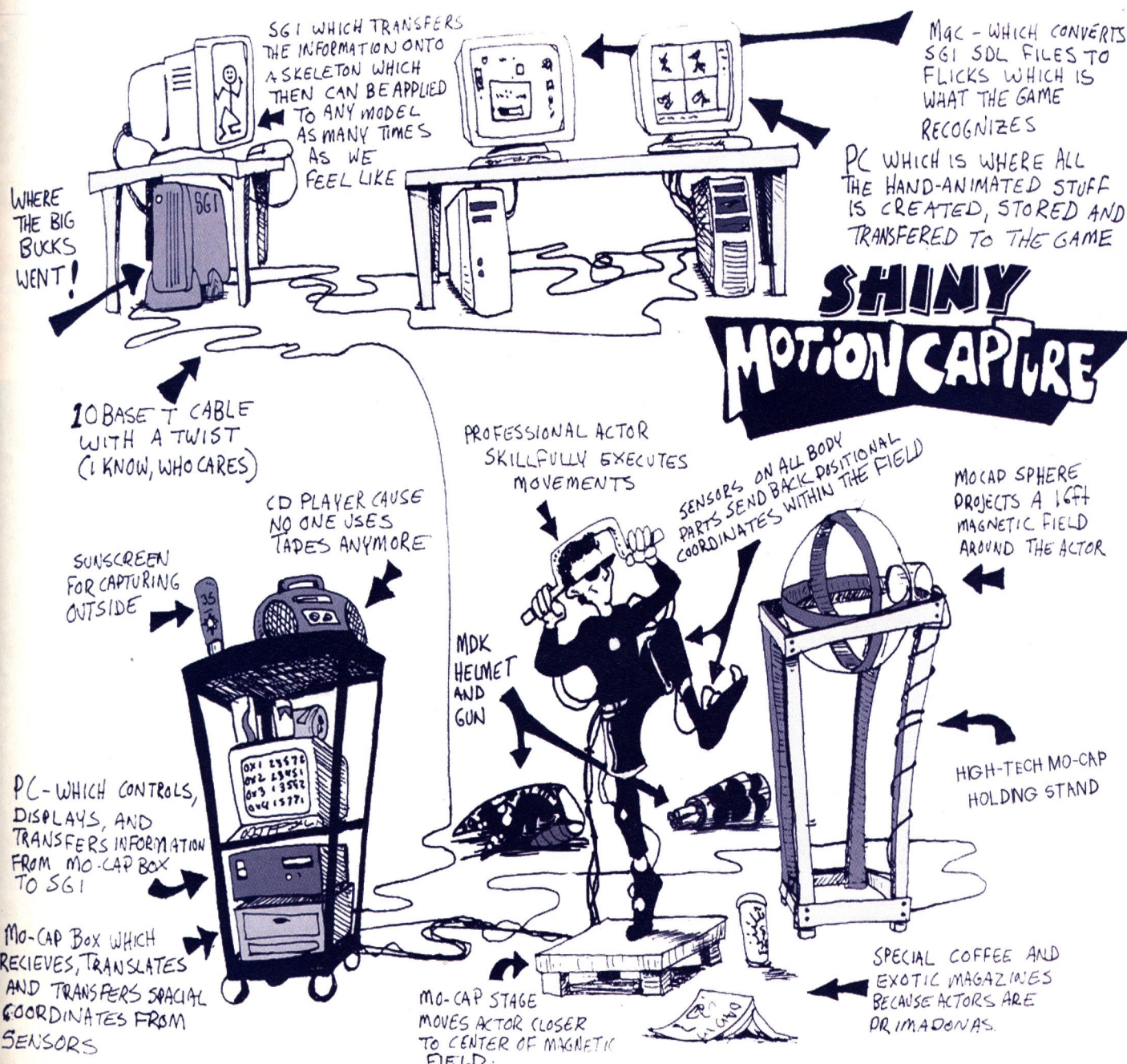


(Above) For more accurate targeting, the gun can be mounted to the front of your helmet, giving it a first-person perspective.

Do you believe that motion capture is the future of videogames?

More animation, more movements, more move options, ten times as much animation – yes, I think it's a good tool and I also believe that it does have a place in the future of videogames.

Remember however that I am a traditional animator first – and you will never get rid of us. Z



REVIEW ZONE



Syndicate Wars...
It's been a few years coming, but is Bullfrog's sequel really a worthy successor? Page 54

THE ZONE SCORING SYSTEM



90+ CLASSIC

The highest accolade a game can attain. A wonderful example of gaming excellence that deserves to be recognised and indeed cherished, or something.



80-89 RECOMMENDED

An excellent game that simply lacks that certain something that makes it one of the true greats. Well worth checking out though.



20 and below PANTS

Absolutely bloody awful. Crap with a capital C. Naff with a capital N. You get the picture.



486 FRIENDLY

The DX2 is still one of the most popular spec machines, but how do you know what games will run on the thing? This icon shows you which games you can still enjoy even if you don't have a ninja Pentium.

Looking back

Z

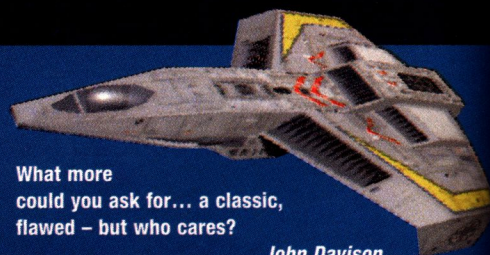
Arrrgggghhh!!! Have you ever known anything like it? On one hand it's one of the most playable games since *C&C*, but then once you've spent several weeks with the thing it also becomes incredibly infuriating. Don't get me wrong, *Z* really is a top game, but like its cousin from Westwood it suffers from a few problems that stem from the AI system. Patrick mentioned some problems in his review last month, but as you get further and further in you notice things that wind you up sooooo much. Oddly though, many of the problems just make you want to get through the game, something which although not the perfect definition of 'gameplay' is as near as dammit.

To me there are two incredibly annoying factors that spoil things... Firstly there's the fact that your tanks very often trundle into a minor confrontation with the gun turret facing the wrong way. Surely most tank commanders would point their

bloody guns at the target that's been assigned??? It's not too much to ask, surely... and when you have a one-on-one battle between two evenly matched tanks it usually ends up being a case of whoever gets the first shot in, wins. Argh!

My second gripe is this. Later on in the mission (starting from about level six or seven onwards) you find that some of the deciding factors of a campaign are purely random. The perfect example of this is when you find that the outcome of a battle relies purely on whether or not an enemy tank turns left or right when it leaves the factory. If you have a game saved you can keep going back over again until it eventually goes the way that you want it to.

On first testing many of these problems are pretty transparent – and even tolerable – but they will wind you up. If anyone doubts that *Z* is a classic though, check this out. Both Spike (our freelance artist) and Danny (who works on *Metal Hammer*... which is situated in another building) still fight over machines after 6pm because they want to play *Z* – and that's six weeks after the CDs originally came into the building. We've had copies of *Z* pinched, we've had people ringing up begging to come and have a quick go, and we've had network games that have gone on for ages.



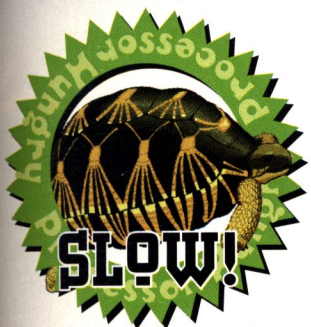
What more could you ask for... a classic, flawed – but who cares?

John Davison

Multimedia madness

Something's been bugging me about the whole multimedia thing for some time now. Ever since games on CD became the norm, all the software houses have been going absolutely bonkers trying to cram as much stuff on to the things as they possibly can. The upshot of this is that we are now getting lots of games with movie-style cut-scenes, on LOTS of CDs. For example, I've just reviewed *The Pandora Directive* (top game alert) which comes on no less than SIX discs. Bloody hell! I spent half my time switching from one CD to the other, and then waiting for the thing to load up. This was acceptable in the days of the Amiga, when you had to arse about with floppies to get to the next part of the game, but do we really want to go through all this again in 1996? Er, no. Picture this: *Wing Commander V* on twenty CDs. You've just paid sixty quid for it and





PROCESSOR HUNGRY

Some games run slowly, even on high-spec machines with ninjascope graphics cards. Just run something like *Magic Carpet* in hi-res on virtually any PC and you end with something running in Jerko-vision.



WINDOWS 95

Speaks for itself really – if it's got this icon slapped on it, it's been designed to take advantage of all that Windows 95 offers.

90+	CLASSIC
80-89	RECOMMENDED
70-79	GOOD
50-69	AVERAGE
40-49	BELOW AVERAGE
20-39	POOR
20 and below	PANTS

In perspective

This is designed to be a pure visual guide as to how games of a similar style compare to one another. The bars do not relate to previous review scores... they are simply an indication of how the reviewer feels about the products on a sliding scale.

Game 1

Game 2

PC Zone use Gateway 2000 PCs exclusively 'cause they're absolutely fab. If you want any more info about Gateway 2000 machines, you can call them on:

0800 742000



GATEWAY2000

"You've got a friend in the business."

Thanks to

- Marc, Paul and Pete at GT Interactive
- Cathy at Bullfrog
- Eric and Abby at Bitmap Bros.

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(Right) Our Chris reckons *The Pandora Directive* is the best adventure game ever made – even if it does have a Joan Collins lookalike in it.



now you're having to put your mate on a twenty quid retainer so that he can rummage through them all while you're playing the thing to get you to the next part of the game. Arse! What I'm saying is we never thought about this when we were moaning about not having 'true' multimedia experiences on our PCs back in 1990, did we? We simply didn't envisage the awful, horrible CD switching scenario that would creep in almost without us noticing. Then again, if they *didn't* put *The Pandora Directive* on millions of CDs, we wouldn't have all those cool cut-scenes that pop up throughout the game. Okay then, I'll just shut up.

Chris Anderson

Baku Baku Animal

I don't know anyone who was fully prepared for this when it came in. Both myself and Jeremy visited Sega a few months ago and had this demonstrated to us, and when we got back everyone refused to believe that something that was basically a jumped-up *Tetris* clone could be so incredibly good. Then the review copy came in and we had people fighting over who was actually going to review it. Then, after Rob (the bloke that won the furore) eventually gave it back, a number of impromptu late-night *Baku Baku* sessions started occurring for no apparent reason. One night in particular springs to mind... "Who's coming to the

pub then?" says Patrick, to the remaining peeps in the office. "Okay... just one quick game of *Baku Baku* and then we'll be there," is the reply. A seriously competitive session of 'winner stays on' ensues before a number of the less proficient players bugger off for a few jars. Later, hours after the game started, it was discovered that Warren (erstwhile reviews editor of *CD-ROM Magazine*) and Jason (former art editor of *PC Zone*) were still playing the thing. Addicted? I think so. This is a game that seems to have people playing it for hours on end and is more than capable of inducing *real fights* between people... with fists. Never, ever, ever play this with your girlfriend – if you do, you won't have one for much longer.

John Davison



Cool games

We see hundreds of games over the months but there are a few that we hang on to and continue to play at lunchtime/when we're supposed to be doing more important stuff...

Syndicate Wars

Quake

Duke Nukem 3D

The Pandora Directive

Z



Crap games

There are some games that you can leave in the middle of the room with a big sign next to them saying "please steal me" and you still can't get rid of the bloody things...

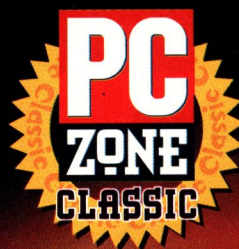
Bud Tucker

Urban Runner

Onside Soccer

Offensive

UMS3

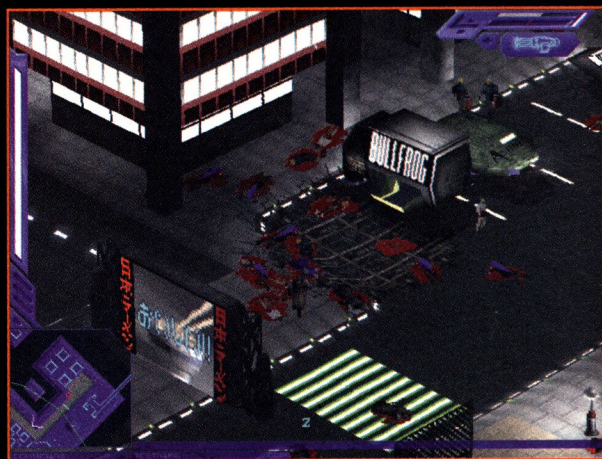


Charlie Brooker once owned a trenchcoat. Well, it smelt like a trench, anyway. A Frenchman's trench that hadn't been wiped since 1978. Oddly enough, each time he wore it, people would run away screaming. Just like in *Syndicate Wars*...

THANK YOU FOR PURCHASING THE PCZ-43-10-96 *Syndicate Wars* Review Module. We hope it brings you many minutes of fun and excitement as you rummage through the text in search of facts, figures, criticisms and general advisory dialogue. Before using your module, you are legally required to complete the following questionnaire, designed to evaluate your psychological make-up. Only those in the highest scoring bracket may use the Review Module.

USE OF THE REVIEW MODULE WITHOUT QUALIFICATION IS AN OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

(Below) Now that's what I call carnage.



Syndicate Wars

THIS IS GOOD. THIS IS VERY VERY good. No. Wait a minute. It's better than that. This is *brilliant*. This game is brilliant. Aside from *Quake*, I haven't enjoyed a game this much in *ages*. This is *Syndicate Wars*. It's one of the best excuses for taking

the phone off the hook and staying indoors for a week that I've ever come across. In terms of concept, content and execution, it's one of the best games I've ever played on any system. Ever. I'm in gamegeek heaven.

What makes it so good? Almost everything. I don't know quite

where to start, so I reckon one of the best things to do is start with one of the most important aspects – yes, you've guessed it, the gameplay.

The gameplay

Syndicate Wars will appeal to anyone who liked either *Doom* or *Command &*

Conquer (well, that narrows it down a bit, eh?). It's got the cathartic violence of the former, and the strategic tension of the latter. Those of you familiar with the first *Syndicate* only need to know this: *Syndicate Wars* is even better. Those of you who haven't played the original are in for a *major* treat.

Here's the deal: You've got this gang of cyborgs, see. Four of 'em (occasionally less) who can be controlled as a group, or individually. They can have their moods altered with special drugs (depending on how trigger-happy you want them to be). The aim is to complete a series of missions, each set in a different city. These start off being fairly simple – 'kill a couple of bad guys' affairs – but rapidly turn into nightmarishly difficult assignments. Some require extensive planning. One mission, for instance, has you masterminding the hijack of a convoy of armoured bullion trucks. Another involves kidnapping a pair of high-powered business executives who are under police guard. All of them end with shitloads of corpses littering the pavement, like so many discarded socks across a teenager's bedroom carpet. Cops, enemy agents, innocent bystanders – everybody dies. Make no mistake – this is ultraviolence, shoved right in your face. The vicarious thrills just never stop coming. It's as addictive as crack cocaine and *The Simpsons* put together.

In between the action sequences you'll also need to keep an eye on your finances, and most important of all, your Research and Development team. Investigating new tools of destruction and cybernetic upgrades for your soldiers is utterly essential (and without it, you'll never get your hands on the really spectacular weapons).

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

© BastardCorp 2345 z-61Ab

1) You're walking along the beach when suddenly you notice a turtle lying upside down on the sand. Its soft underbelly is being burnt by the harsh sunshine, but no matter how much it wriggles its legs, it can't turn itself the right way up. What do you do?

- a) Pick the little feller up and correct the problem.
- b) Walk past hurriedly, then feel guilty later.
- c) Pick it up, jump behind a nearby palm tree, and lie in wait until somebody walks by, at which point you leap out and bash them repeatedly about the face and neck with it.

2) While queueing for an AntiGrav-Bus you find yourself on the receiving end of a lengthy and very very dull example of aimless conversation, forced upon you by an elderly lady with a kind face. What do you do?

- a) Try to get to know her a little better. Chance meetings with strangers sometimes yield lifelong friendships.
- b) Smile and nod your way through the brunt of it, while continually checking your watch and praying for salvation (in the form of a bus).
- c) Empty two thousand rounds of high-explosive ammunition into her face, the bus stop, and everything else you can see.

3) You're late for work, and the boss shouts at you. What do you do?

- a) Apologise profusely, while inwardly admiring his brusque style of management and cursing your poor timekeeping.
- b) Apologise profusely, while inwardly picturing an amusing scenario wherein he finds himself suddenly and unexpectedly mounted by a particularly large bull that's mistaken him for the prettiest cow in the world.
- c) Slip on a long dark trenchcoat and leave the building in silence, returning a few minutes later to plant a high-order to strafe any bodies blown out of the upstairs windows with bullets as they plummet through the fire and broken glass towards the unforgiving solidity of the pavement.

4) This is the final question. How does that make you feel?

- a) Oh, what a shame. I do like a good questionnaire.
- b) Thank God for that. I haven't got all day, you know.
- c) Tell me about *Syndicate Wars* right now or I'll machine-gun you in the face. Twice.

If you answered mainly (a)s:

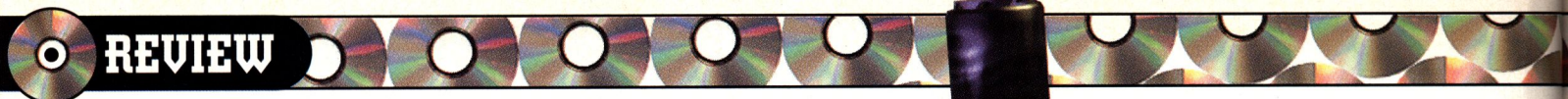
Sorry. You are upstanding and righteous and must on no account be allowed to operate the Review Module. Piss off. Go on, piss off. **FAILURE TO PISS OFF IS AN OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.**

If you answered mainly (b)s:

You may use the Review Module. *Syndicate Wars* will do wonders for all that latent stress.

If you answered mainly (c)s:

You are brutish, amoral, unpredictable, ruthless, and quite, quite insane.
YOU ARE SYNDICATE WARS.



(Left) Ooh, now that's pretty.

Hot sound and vision

In hi-res mode, (which requires a decent Pentium to move efficiently) *Syndicate Wars* looks glorious. It is chunkier than the original – which takes a bit of getting used to – but before long you end up falling hopelessly in love with it. We're talking *Blade Runner* territory here – lots of gloomy towers, glaring neon, and fully animated video screens (which have FMV adverts for cult sci-fi comic *2000AD* and *Manga* products on them). The brilliant lighting effects aren't just pretty, they actually add to the game (blow up all the lampposts, and you'll find yourself suddenly plunged into darkness). One major difference between this and the original is that the city is represented in 'proper' 3D – you can spin it around and tilt up and down to get a *really* good peek at the carnage.

And *Syndicate Wars*' sound is utterly top of the pops, too. Aside from the menacing soundtrack (a cunning blend of CD audio and MIDI synthesis), there are rumbling explosions, horrendous blood-curdling screams, and ominous tannoy's telling the hapless citizens to 'keep moving'. Bloody fantastic.

As you can imagine, add all of these elements together and you've got possibly the most pervasively threatening atmosphere you've ever experienced. Unless you've ever walked down Kilburn High Road at chucking out time, that is (which isn't recommended, by the way).

In perspective

Syndicate Wars has something in common with all of the following games, except that – for my money – it's better than any of 'em.

Syndicate Wars

Bedlam

Crusader: No Remorse

Command & Conquer



(Right) Under attack from a flying car thing. You get to drive them, too.

Ooh, you are awful..

Part of the joy of *Syndicate Wars* is the way it positively encourages you to act in a reprehensible manner. Aside from the thrill you get from committing purposeless acts of random savagery (which usually involves running after a screaming crowd of pedestrians with a flamethrower), here are just two of the ways in which acting like a devious bastard can actually aid your cause...

1) Exploiting the emergency services

You'll often find yourself in need of a set of wheels in the game. Sometimes they're just parked at the side of the road for you to casually help yourself to (ie steal), but occasionally you'll need to be a little more cunning. Here's one particularly good method: Stand on a street corner for a couple of minutes, shooting as many pedestrians as you can. Once you've bagged a load of them, hide round the corner. Now wait a few minutes. If you're in luck, an ambulance will arrive. As soon as the do-gooding medic steps out onto the pavement, shoot him right in the face. Et voilà – one spanking new ambulance for you to speed around in. Cool, huh?



(Above) *Casualty* was never like this.

2) The 'Groupie Shield'

Switch on the 'Persuadertron' (or equivalent), and start rounding up a few easily-brainwashed civvies. Once you've got a large crowd of them milling around you like mindless sheep, head for the nearest bunch of gun-toting bad guys. Not only will your gang of adoring followers join in the fighting with any discarded guns they come across, they also make a handy human shield – especially useful when someone else is sniping at you from afar.



The background

Syndicate Wars would make a great movie.

A great banned movie, anyway. It's a fiendishly subversive sci-fi extravaganza which sees the people of Earth (or Utopia, as it's now known) presided over by the ruthless EuroCorp Syndicate, a dictatorship of corporate businesses which keeps its populace in check via the use of surgically implanted 'mindchips' designed to prevent independent thought. Things start to go wrong, however, when a mysterious computer virus begins wiping out EuroCorp mainframes across the globe. Cue financial chaos, malfunctioning 'mindchips', and the rise of a sinister religious army calling itself the Church of the New Epoch. As 'civilised society' disintegrates around them, the two sides go to war in city streets around the world. Their foot soldiers are cyborgs, bastardised human bodies which stalk the urban jungle laden with guns. The conquering side will need determination, cunning and – most important of all – lots and lots of ammunition.

IN THE RED CORNER...

We have the cyborg henchmen of the EuroCorp Syndicate. Stars of the original game, they sport long, grimy trenchcoats and have a nice line in moody lurking. They're also hard as nails.



IN THE BLUE CORNER...

It's the challengers, the crazed fanatics from the Church of the New Epoch. They wear capes that wouldn't look out of place in Huggy Bear's wardrobe, and as such are clearly *not* to be messed with. They're very clever indeed, and more than a little bit crazy.



OUTSIDE THE RING...

Are the Unguided, an anarchic band of nihilistic hooligans who aren't fighting for a cause – they're fighting for the sheer thrill of it all. Their only purpose in life is to create as much chaos as possible.



TRYING THEIR BEST...

It's the Police. They're only trying to do their job. *Everybody* shoots at them. The average mayfly has a longer life expectancy than these poor bastards.



CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE...

Are the innocent civilians with the happy chips in their heads. Easily identified by their two main behavioural patterns: 1) Running away screaming. 2) Lying dead in a puddle of gore.



There goes the neighbourhood

Buildings, eh? What a huge pain in the arse. I mean, they're just no good for anything. You can't walk *anywhere* these days without a bloody building getting in your way. They clutter up the pavement and they ruin your view of the sky. They're ugly and they're boxy and they shouldn't be allowed. Even Prince Charles thinks so (sort of).

In this respect, *Syndicate Wars* should warm the cockles of the Royal heart nicely. The endless destruction within the game isn't limited to mere human-on-human barbarism – structures get it in the neck as well. Use a sufficiently meaty explosive and you're treated to the sight of entire *skyscrapers* crumbling

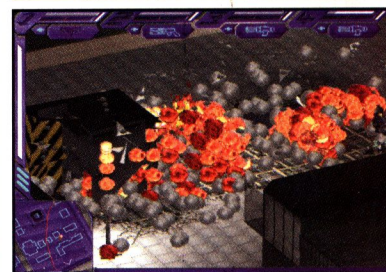
down around you. At times the action gets so insanely apocalyptic you'll suddenly wonder where the skyline went as entire *districts* are destroyed. If the end of the world looks half as good as this, I want it on laserdisc.

A couple of gripes

Those of you who are paying attention will have noticed that I'm enjoying this game. Yet despite all this unalloyed praise, I do have a couple of tiny gripes. They won't seriously spoil your enjoyment, but they are a *tad* irritating...

1) Zooming in and out

Initially, this *really* wound me up. Despite the inclusion of a 'zoom in and



(Right, top to bottom)
Oops-a-daisy!

(Left) Some New Epoch nutters challenge a policeman's right to drive his own vehicle.



out' function, *Syndicate Wars* doesn't give you much control over the zoom factor. Your field of vision is dictated by the range of the weapon you choose: use an Uzi, for instance, and it zooms in close. Pick a long-range rifle and it zooms out again. Most of the time, you don't really notice, but occasionally it's bloody annoying – you can't see what's around the corner, and it doesn't look as nice either. Often I found myself temporarily choosing a long-range weapon just so I could see more of my surroundings. The two-level preview demo Bullfrog sent us a few months ago had a far greater 'zoomed out' look to it – was the change *really* necessary?

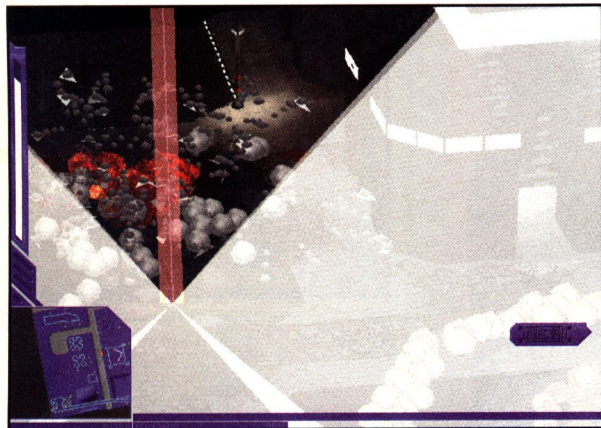
2) The AI 'lapses'

Although the AI is far superior to that in the original *Syndicate*, it does have problems now and again, especially when you move the entire group of agents. Nothing's more irritating than

(Above) Nothing like a little drive-by shooting to lighten the spirits, now is there?

(Below) Sometimes, everything explodes.

(Bottom) The team look on in horror as somebody just misses them with a very large, very scary gun.



What's new in Syndicate Wars

Here's a handy list of just some of the changes that make *Syndicate Wars* better than the original:

- It's all in 'proper' 3D. You can swing the viewpoint around to any angle, tilt up and down, and zoom in and out (a bit).
- You've got a choice of more than one side to play as (psst – notice I didn't say *how many*).
- There are loads of new weapons, some of which are *so* destructive you feel genuine pity for the victims.
- The teams' AI has been greatly improved (they still screw up from time to time, though).
- If you have the firepower, you can decimate *everything*.
- The graphics are miles better (thank you, light-sourcing).
- You can control the movement of individual team members directly with the keyboard or a joypad, should you so desire.
- The use of drugs has been simplified (just like in *Amsterdam*).
- It's sicker. You can even shoot holes in the *corpses*, for Christ's sake.
- Aside from the agents, there are several 'special characters' that you'll come across.

seeing three of your team members strolling effortlessly to their target location, while one inexplicably gets 'stuck' behind a fence somewhere along the route. Like, *duuuuhhh*.

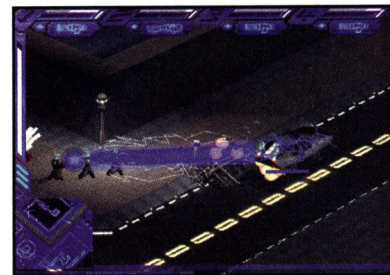
Multiple maniacs

Aside from being a brilliant one-player game, *Syndicate Wars* also has more multi-player options than you can shake a stick at. For starters, you can play with four players on one machine (each controlling an agent via the keyboard or joypad). Better yet, if you have access to a network or modem, you can link up with seven other psychopaths and run riot through the streets. Multi-player games are really quite flexible – not only are you free to play as EuroCorp, The Church or the Unguided, you can also decide what level of firepower will be available – from lo-tech (Uzi 9MM) to 'end-of-the-world' materials (nuclear grenades). As you can probably imagine, it all gets *extremely* noisy. It's also a bloody good laugh.

The conclusion

So, then. We've come to the end of the review. It's late. I want to stop typing. Not just because my wrists ache more than they did the week I first discovered how to 'manipulate' myself (last April, I think it was), but because I want to have another go on the game before I go to bed. According to my watch, it's *quarter to four in the morning*. I have to be up early tomorrow. If I start playing, I might have to forget about sleeping altogether and try to make it through tomorrow with a never-ending stream of strong black coffee instead. And that's sad. That's tragically sad. But I don't care, because I'm *gripped*. I'm quite happy to cancel weekends away and to neglect my social life (well, it wasn't up to much anyway) – *Syndicate Wars* has grabbed me by my entrails and refuses to let go...

Syndicate Wars really does have it all. The more you play it, the better it gets. There's an *unbelievable* amount of detail packed in there. And an equally unbelievable amount of good, honest fun to be soaked up, too. All of you rejoice. Kill, maim, and rejoice. **Z**



Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX/66

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, keyboard, joypad

Score

95

I can't think of a better way to unwind.

Price: £TBA Release date: September

Publisher: Electronic Arts/Bullfrog

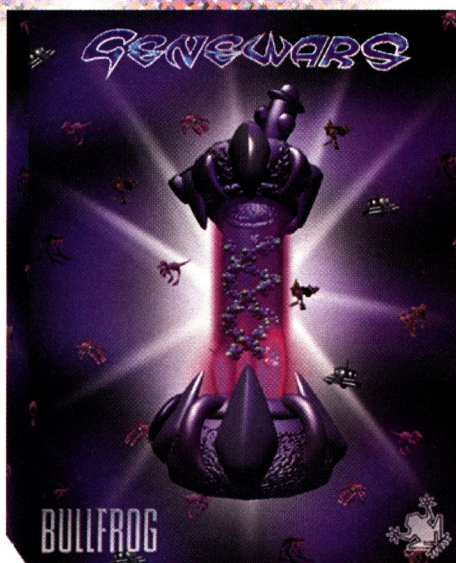
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"You've got a friend in the business."



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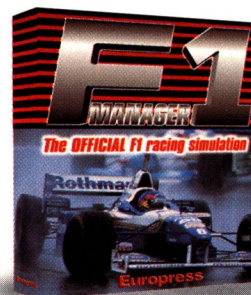


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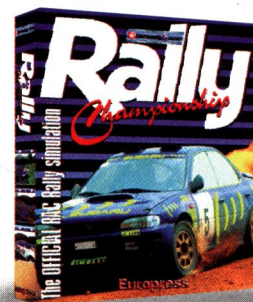
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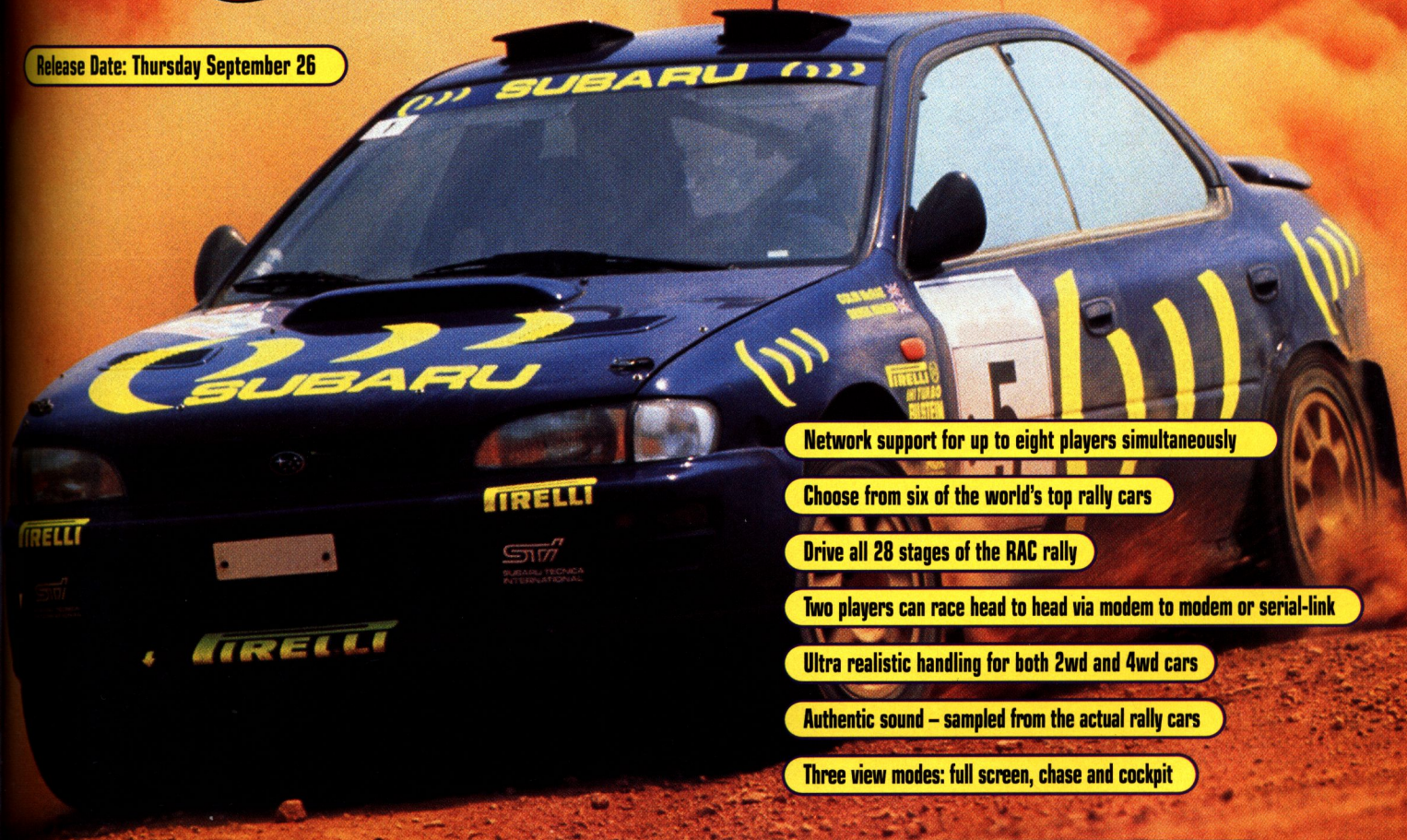
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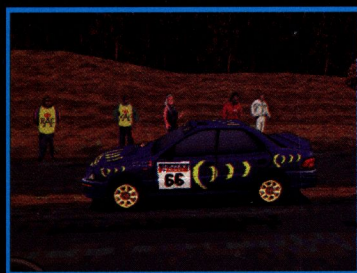
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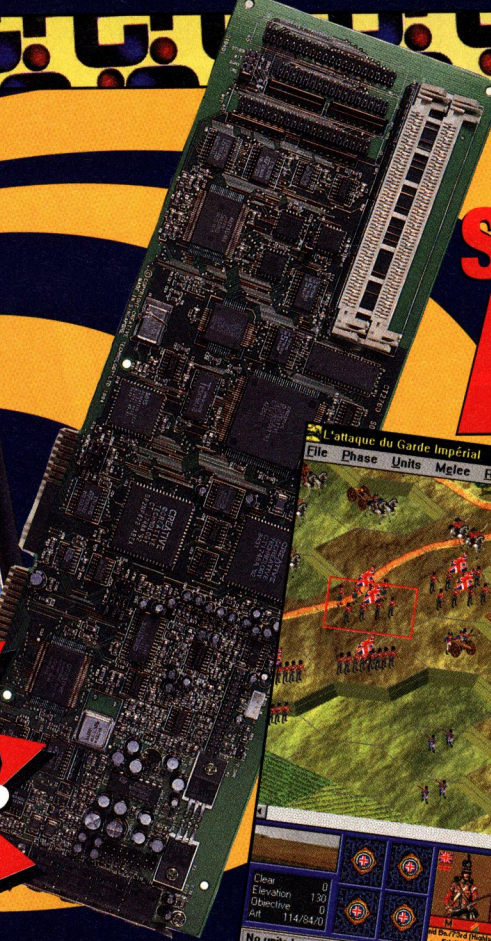


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All correctly answered entries will be put into an important-looking bag and a winner chosen at random. Winners will be notified by post. Any entries received later than 30 November will be ignored. No cash alternative will be offered. No employees from either Dennis Publishing or Empire can enter because they'll probably cheat. Only one entry per household. No correspondence will be entered into and the Editor's decision is final on everything in the whole wide world. All the usual bottom-covering restrictions apply. Submission of entry will be taken as acceptance of the rules.

1 Which of these games has an Abba song title hidden in it?

- a) Battleground Windsor
- b) Battleground Waterloo
- c) Battleground Walthamstow

2 Which of these Empire titles is based in Ardennes?

- a) Pro Pinball: The Web
- b) Battleground Ardennes
- c) Dreamweb

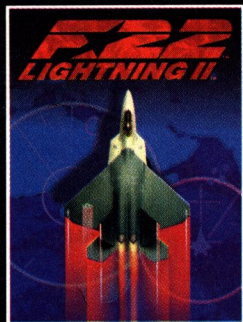
3 Which of these Empire titles scored 87 in PC Zone?

- a) Battleground Ardennes
- b) Battleground Waterloo
- c) Battleground Gettysburg

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Duncan MacDonald once owned a car which didn't have a windscreen, and drove it for six months without tax, MOT or insurance. This makes him choice number one for anarchic driving games.

Megarace 2



(Top) Rendered-orama-tasticness in all its omni-directional poly-splendiferous spoogeticity!

(Above) Flat-tastic but bendicious!

(Top right) Splendidly bridge-acious upwardship!

(Right) Light-sourced shaderama cornering fast in a tunnel-tastic race-omatic manner!

IN THE OLDEN DAYS (WHEN THE shitty PC I still own was considered rather ninja) someone invented the CD-ROM drive, and everyone and their dog went apeshit. "Uncanny," said the population of earth, "it's like having 350 floppy drives all on the go at once." (Or something.) Anyway, about this time a CD game called *Megarace* appeared, and for some reason it sold like hot cakes. I say 'for some reason', because in actual fact the game was utter shite: it got slagged off in the press from Timbuctoo to Dubuque, Iowa.

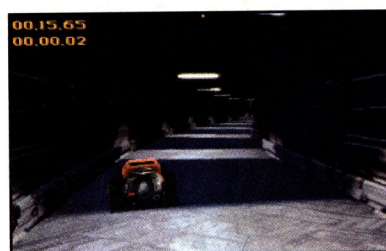
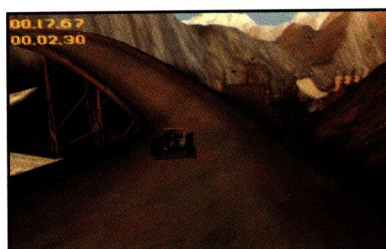
What the *Megarace* programmers had done, you see, was to create a bunch of outlandish racetracks on a Silicon Graphics Workstation (or whatever) and then they kind of spooled the results onto CD (I'm not very technical, but it was something like that). The upshot of all this was that when you played *Megarace* it was like you were just watching a film of a road approaching you (because, er, you were), and on this road was your car – a little blobby thing – which you could move from side to side a wee tad. Accelerating simply speeded the rate of the 'movie' being

spooled off the CD, while braking did the opposite. Oh, and you got to fire some weapons. Oh, yes, and there was loads of FMV between races – quite amusing FMV as it happens, starring a character called Lance Boyle – the gig being that *Megarace* was a really cheesy futuristic game show in which you could win prizes for doing well. And that was about it.

Cheesy but not peasy

So what of *Megarace 2*? Has it been done in the same fashion? Are you still simply watching a movie of a racetrack coming towards you? Is it shite? The answers: yes, yes and no. This time round the vehicles are vectors rather than bitmaps, meaning they get properly animated from all angles: they, and you, can spin, slide and so on. Then there's the fact that you can actually drive the wrong way round the track. (The graphics engine doesn't work in reverse, of course, so they've got round this problem by selecting 'stills' of various parts of the track, and the camera pans and cuts to follow your car. It's like the exterior replay trackside cam on *F1GP*.) The AI on the opponents is pretty cool (they weave like muthas, attacking each other as well as yourself); and the shooting of rockets and dropping of mines is pretty groovy too.

In fact *Megarace 2* as a whole package, including the deliberately cheesy FMV, is pretty gosh-darned enjoyable... until you realise how bloody difficult it is



Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX2

Graphics: VGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, joystick

to win races, and that doesn't take long – it took me ages to get past the second track, and I'm usually pretty good at these things. Still, you want to keep trying just so you can see what the next track looks like, as is always the way.

But it's still on rails

But now we come to the summing up paragraph, and it's here that *Megarace 2* won't fare so well: the main reason being that there are so many driving games available (and others in the pipeline) that are just that much better. At the end of the day it does all come back to the fact that *Megarace 2*, even though it may not always look like it, is on rails (a thought which is always niggling away, no matter how good a job the artists have done on the backgrounds and stuff). You know the saying that goes something like: "Does the prisoner feel confined because he's in prison, or because he knows he's in prison?" Well, with *Megarace 2* it's a bit of both. **Z**

Score

79

Fun but over-hard, this falls a little flat in the long run.

Price: £TBC **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Mindscape

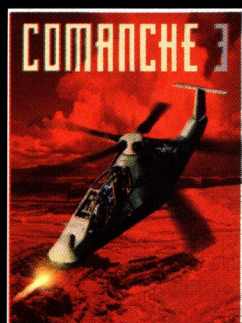
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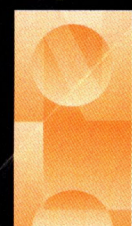
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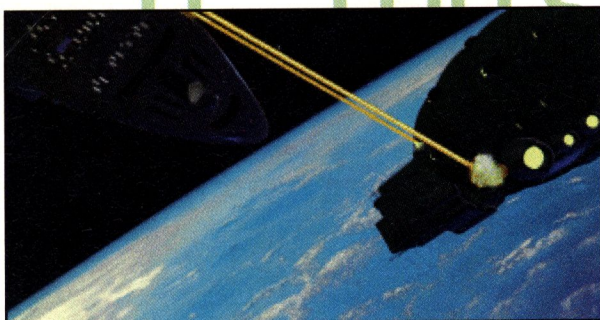
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"noun. 1. One who maintains a complete denial of all established authority and institutions, rejects all values and belief in existence and practices terrorism." Sounds like Paul Presley to me. (Yeah, right - Ed.)

Nihilist



MY AVERSION TO FAST ACTION shooting games has been well publicised (which doesn't explain my ravings over *Quake* in this very issue I suppose, but no one's perfect... except Tony Hart who is perhaps as close to all-round perfection as a man can get these days), and my loss-rates in Deathmatch games of *Doom* often read like the monthly profit/loss figures of a chocolate fireguard manufacturer. So when I feel the windy rumblings of praise struggling to be set free from my criticism sphincter, it's either that I'm experiencing something truly great or that last night's dalliance with the seductive mistress of Tandoori is starting to take its toll.

I've been playing *Nihilist* from Philips recently, I haven't had a curry since April and my stomach is making more noise than Niagara Falls.

A classic lives on

I could regale you with a fantastic story about futuristic space colonies and huge megalithic corporations and the like, but since the game's programmers are taking lessons from the iD school of game design and forsaking a plot in favour of action, there hardly seems a

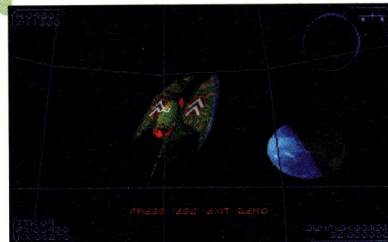
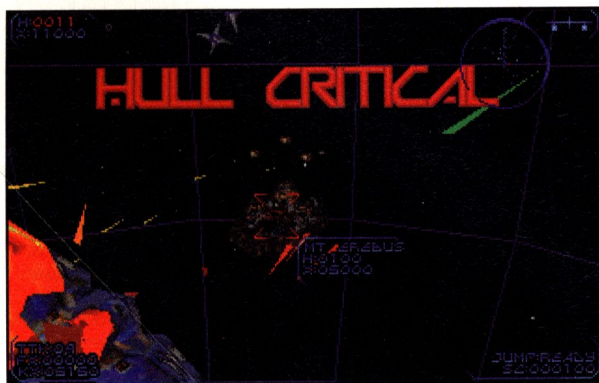
(Above) You might think that those two behemoths lobbing laser bolts at each other form the basis of some kind of plot. Bwah hah hah ha ha...

(Above right) One of the nicer-looking ships available to you. Also on offer are a bulldozer, a buzzing fly and a saucer-shaped UFO.

(Above far right) A giant trash compactor neatly slices you in two. Other levels are even stranger.



(Below) Bonuses are often thrown into each arena. Here you could really do with a Hull Booster.



point. The basic crux is that there are these huge space-based arenas in which fly various different fighter craft. The aim is to shoot everything that moves, collect the bonuses and power-ups that are habitually thrown into the proceedings and keep going until you're dead. It's just sit down, start firing and hope you survive.

What makes *Nihilist* a step above the rest is that the way the game works is so effortlessly smooth, so sublimely intuitive, so eye-pleasingly astonishing (even in low-res mode - although you should see the hi-res! Lor!) and so deity-dammit fun that the first time I sat down with it I lost all track of time and practically wasted a day.

It works along similar principles to that age-old classic *Asteroids*, except you view the proceedings from a first-person perspective (save for within the bonus sub-game of top-down *Asteroids* which is actually so good it could almost have been a separate release) and you're up against other players as well as rocks and debris. Find yourself a couple of connection wires (or a good network) and you're up against other humans Deathmatch-style.

"Style?"

Yes, forgive the lapse into street-level jargonism there but there was a reason - honest. As well as being a treat to play and a joy to behold, it's also got the most 'appropriate' soundtrack I've ever heard. Philips have shepherded the talents of such popular beat combo artistes as Pop Will Eat Itself, Dog Eat Dog and a couple of 'junglist' performers that I, in my Tony Bennett/Harry Worth and his Orchestra worshipping life, have never heard of. The beauty of it for me, though, is that once installed you can plonk any audio cd you like into the drive and program your own soundtrack using the game's options screen. At last,



death and mayhem to the melodic sounds of *Avenues and Alleyways*. Heaven, thy name is *Nihilist*.

I'm really struggling to find a bad thing to say about it. It doesn't get repetitive, despite only having three shapes for the arenas, simply because of the variety that takes place inside each of them. Asteroid levels, mayhem levels, retro levels (with everything in '80s-style wireframe), a bizarre 'pool table' level. Even in the more normal ones the sheer wealth of ships available, the different missiles on offer, the use of teams in multi-player mode... I could go on but I've run out of room. **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX2/66

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All digital cards

Controls: Mouse, joystick, keyboard

Score

91

Asteroids is dead. Long live Asteroids '96.

Price: £39.99 Release date: September

Publisher: Philips

Tel: 0171-911 3000

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------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------

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Q RETURN TO PITS

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R REPLAY

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1

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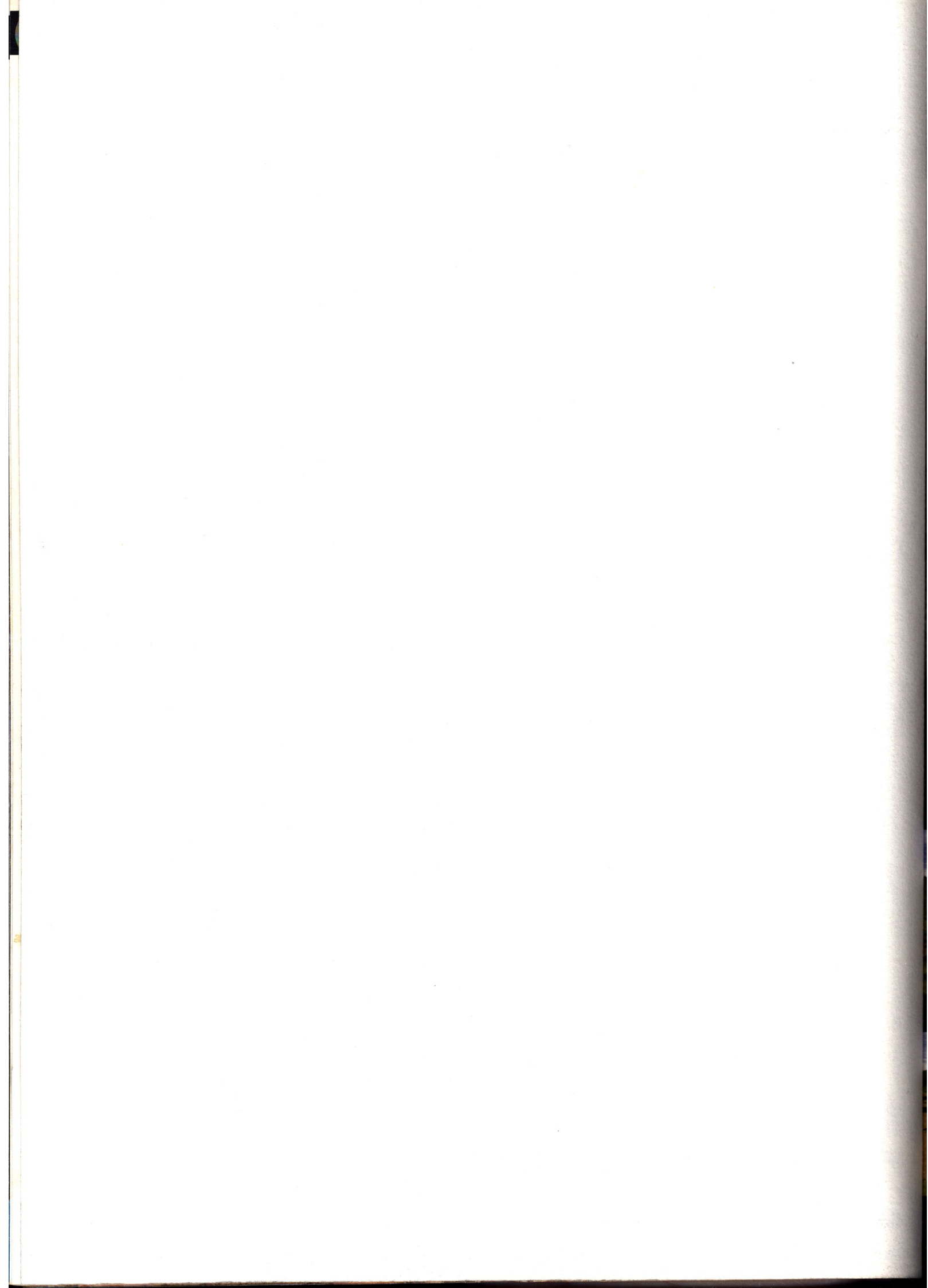
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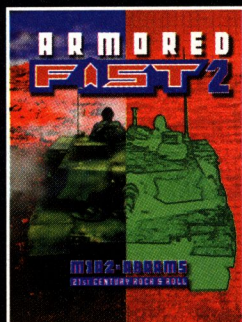
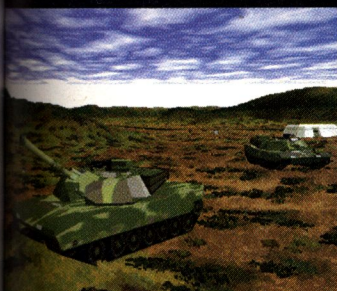
A UP/ ACCELERATE		ALT + D CYCLE THRU DIFF LEVELS OF TRACKSIDE DETAIL														ENTER SIGNAL TO PITTS
Z DOWN/ BRAKE									N DRIVER NAME	SPACEBAR SELECT	< LEFT/ STEER LEFT	> RIGHT/ STEER RIGHT			← TRACKSIDE CAMERA VIEW	→ COCKPIT VIEW



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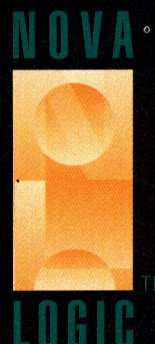
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Intro writing skills, Rule One: put the title of the game under scrutiny and make a play on the word or words, thus attributing a new meaning which can be explored to 'hilarious' effect. Alternatively, give up, say "Bah!" and just state the facts... Bah! Duncan MacDonald reviews *Cyberstorm*.

Cyberstorm



THE TROUBLE WITH TRADITIONAL HEX games (and let's face it, they're nearly all ww2 anorak-o-ramas) is that it doesn't take long before you lose track of everything... or it doesn't if I'm playing, that is. There you are one minute, with nine million tanks, ten million jeeps, 12 million aeroplanes and 406 trillion soldiers, and a cunning plan for each and every one of them. But there you are a minute later staring gormlessly at the monitor: what was it you were trying to do again? You can't remember. Worse than that, you can't even be bothered to TRY remembering. You know deep down in your soul that you're going to lose the battle anyway, so why waste an entire life studying such appallingly sad things as hit-points on a tragic look-up table?

When is a hex not a hex?

I phoned Tony Bollard-Chapman, chairman of the Anti-Hex Game League in Croydon, and asked him to define a 'hex'. "A hex," he told me, "is a giant six-sided shape containing a badly-drawn picture of an artillery unit."

I asked his definition of a 'nightmare'. "A nightmare," he said, "is 250 hexes."

As you can see, we were as one on the subject – as I knew we would be.

I then mentioned my pet theory about how a hex game could make itself more palatable if it 'hid' the hexes. He asked me to explain so I cited *Colonisation*, adding that, much as I shared his



hatred of hex games, that particular one was sort of pretty addictive and unhexy.

"Rubbish," he retorted. He then asked what aspect of it most appealed to me.

"Attacking the natives and stealing their gold," I replied.

"Precisely," he said, knowledgeably.

"You were playing a hex game as if it was a shoot 'em up. I take it you never completed the game as was intended by the author... establishing trade routes and ultimately gaining independence from your motherland?"

I admitted I'd never got to that point, as I got bored when I ran out of soldiers.

"I assume you've played *Civilization* and *Civilization II*?" he went on.

I said that I had. He asked me what my main aim was in those games. "To invent nuclear weapons," I replied, adding that I never got very far.

"Exactly," he said. "You're happy to play a hex game until the point you realise it's a hex game, whereupon you retire."

"Yes," I said, "which was my point."

"Whaaaat?"

"My point was that a hex game could be more palatable if it 'hid' the hexes."

"Hmmm," he muttered, disgruntled.

Unbelievable: I'd won an argument – and we weren't even arguing.

(Above left) Unlike many strategy games these days, *Cyberstorm* is an old-fashioned, turn-based hex game.

(Above right) There are a variety of Hercs for you to use.

Hex, drugs and rock 'n' roll

So onto *Cyberstorm*. Okay, *Cyberstorm* is a hex game which has hidden its hexes. (Sort of.) It's also hidden the fact that it's turn-based. (Sort of.) Here's the gig:

Plot: You're with a futuristic mining company, and your business is taking ore from planets called Zarp and Zoog and whatnot. The way you get this ore is to send in a spaceship which has 'robots' onboard. Once the ship has landed, you send the robots to the site (or sites) in question, they fill up with as much of the stuff as they can carry, and then rejoin the ship for the journey home.

Problems: You're not alone. There are other inter-stellar mining companies.

Solution: Weapons and tactics.

So that's the basics. Here's a sample mission, and I'll take it from the beginning of the game where you find yourself (as in most games) tooled up to the ones rather than the nines.

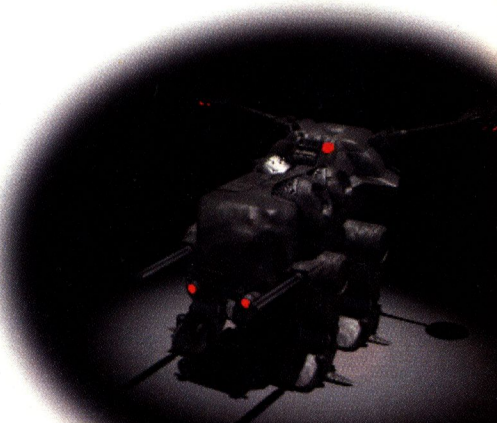
Step one: you've got to get your robots sorted. And this is where the word 'robots' has to be qualified, because they're not really robots per se; they're part human, part machine. Think of Ripley at the end of *Aliens* stomping around in her giant exoskeleton doofer, and you'll be about there – apart from the fact that the 'people' inside your *Cyberstorm* exoskeletons are genetically engineered rather than born of woman.

Still with me? Good. So you've got three rather crap Bioderms (the people) and three equally crap Hercs (the exoskeletons). You also have a tiny bit of dosh, so it's time for your first resource management frenzy:

- (1) Are you anticipating any trouble?
- (2) Do you intend to mine just the required amount of ore, or do you fancy some bonuses?
- (3) Do you want



(Left) As you'd expect from this type of game, you can affect pretty much anything statistically. Okay, so it may be boring, but some people like it.



(Far right) Bloody hell, it's Marty Feldman!



to recon the entire planet just in case there's a spanky 'find' on the cards?
(4) Are your Bioderms skilled enough in particular specialist areas?

And on and on. So here's what you may decide:

- (1) Yes, I anticipate trouble.
- (2) I want to mine as much as possible given my equipment.
- (3) Yes, I want to recon everything.
- (4) I need to do some tutoring.

To this end you equip your two largest Hercs with an extra loading bay (more ore) and as many weapons as they can now carry (which isn't many). This leaves Herc number three free for one of two roles: defence/attack or speed/stealth. However, your decision to do a mega recon dictates the latter, so you strip it down to the bare necessities – no weapons, no 'extras', no nothing. Now it's time to take your three Bioderms to school. Bioderm one and two, being up for the same job, get tutored in, say, missile and cannon skills (just in case). With the few remaining credits you can teach your recon Bioderm a thing or two about piloting (seeing as how it's got to cover a lot of ground quickly).

Hex, lies and videotape

Blam! Planet landing. Cue *Civilization*-style 'Oh dear, I can't see very far at all' syndrome. Exploration is all-illuminating, and your recon robot is about to come into its own, so click, drag, release – you've set a waypoint for the thing. It doesn't move though, naturally, seeing as *Cyberstorm* is turn-based. Time for the mining robots, and it's guesswork as to where they should go, so a couple of furtive click, drag, releases later and their waypoints are also set. END TURN. COMPUTER MOVES ITS PIECES. Blam! Your recon robot has covered heaps of



ground (seeing as it's lightweight) and has revealed a large ore deposit area. You set it a new waypoint and set your slower mining robots waypoints to inside the ore area. END TURN. COMPUTER MOVES ITS PIECES. Blam! Blimey, your recon robot uncovered some 'enemy activity'. You wish you'd given it a bloody cannon. You waypoint it back to the mothership in the hope it hasn't been spotted. You tell the mining robots to do their thang, which takes a few turns. They survive. You fly back to base. You get bonus dosh and access to more Herc types, more Derm types and more hardware of the 'kill' variety. Time for mission two...

Hex crazed maniac

And on it goes. You know the route with these things; while you get promotions (essentially a bigger 'army' and bank account) and access to a myriad of new and ever more wonderful gizmos, so the enemy does too. Tactics become all, but foolish bravado can pay off too (ahem, not). If I'm making things sound simplistic, it's due to lack of space. I couldn't cover *Cyberstorm*'s 'everything-ness' in two pages even if I made a pact with the Devil. Suffice to say it seems pretty unhexy and unturn-based at the beginning but becomes more and more weighed down with every new mission. If you get to the point where you're controlling 28 robots and have discovered 72 per cent of the 'secret things' hidden away in the far corners of planet surfaces, then you'll deserve to wear a T-shirt emblazoned with the legend 'I am a Hex God'. (Or, indeed, 'Sad Bastard'.)

If however you're more of a C&C real-time person, you'll love the first ten hours of *Cyberstorm* but will gradually become dazed and confused: the clunkiness of the graphics and grooviness of the scope of tactics and what have you may fall by the wayside when faced with the realisation that a large scale exchange of fire can last almost literally a zillion years.

Oh, and a final note... modem and network options akimbo. Yes! Go head-to-head. Great in theory, but imagine just how snoozy it's going to be when it's not your turn. Do you wait at the keyboard? Go shopping? Have a bath? Watch your garden grow? Still, different strokes for different folks, eh? **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb
Processor: 486DX2/66
Graphics: SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Mouse

Score

85

Massive robot-shooty-hidey-thinky hex jobby. Plays great, looks great, but it helps if you're ever so slightly anal.

Price: £TBC **Release date:** Out now
Publisher: Sierra **Tel:** 01734 303322

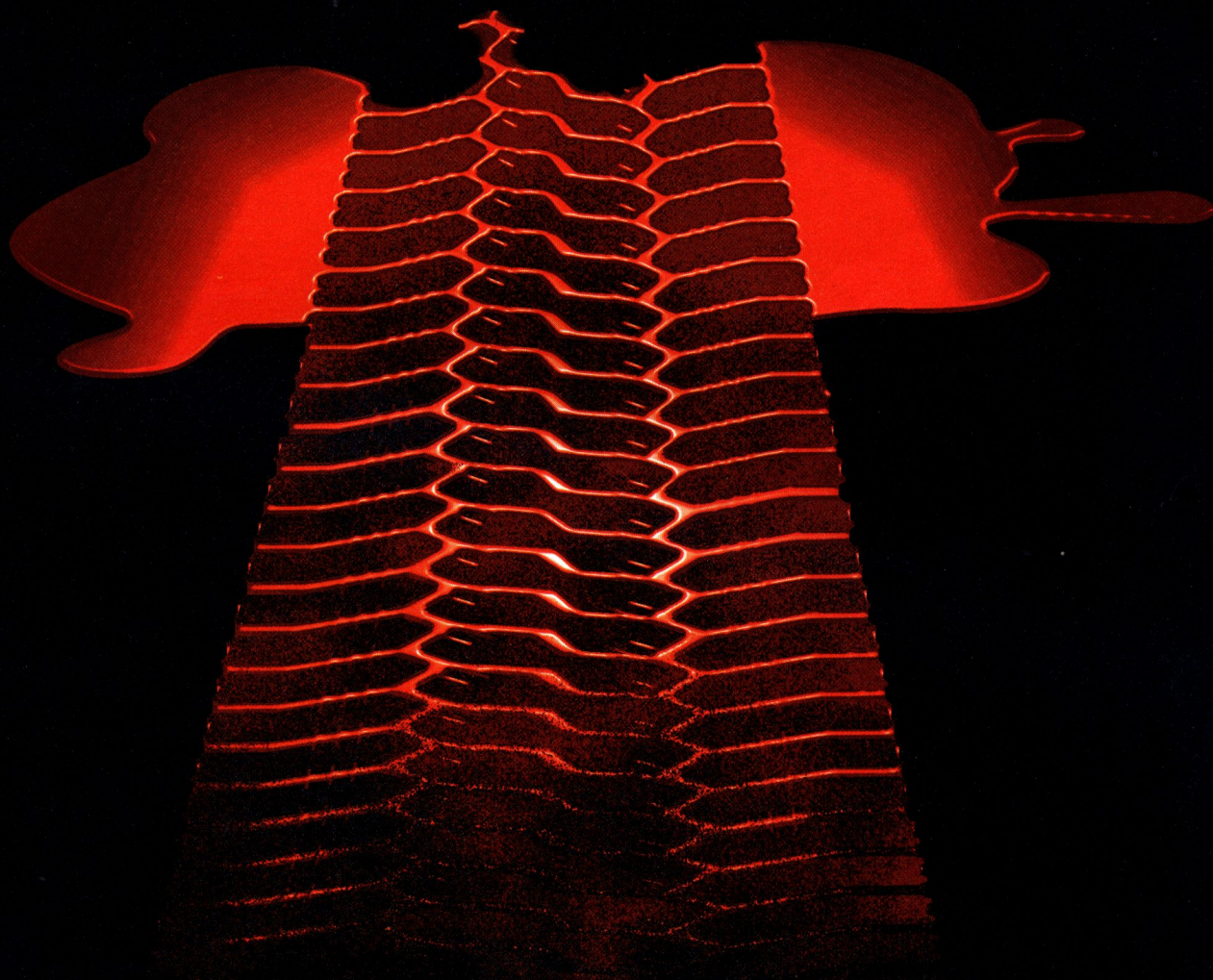
GATEWAY2000
"You've got a friend in the business."

(Below) A mission briefing, a picture of a planet and three hexes.

(Below right) Monsties!



CARMAGEDDON



IT'S MURDER ON THE STREETS

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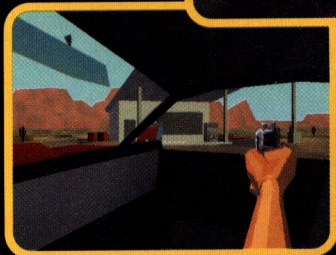
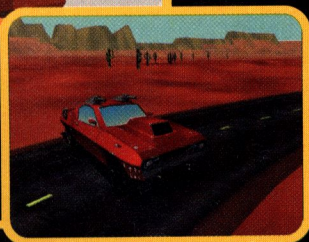
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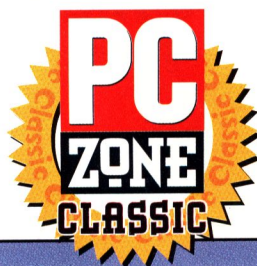
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Links LS



Patrick McCarthy has long since given up trying to be interesting in golf game reviews. Which makes everything much simpler all round, because they never came out interesting anyway. So tartan pants on and tee off!

THE NEW VERSION OF LINKS, AS you'd expect - given that there was very little wrong with the previous versions - is basically an upgrade, with even better graphics and more gameplay options. No more single rounds of strokeplay - you can play best ball (a team game with stroke or matchplay options), matchplay and skins, but no tournament option. There are loads of practice modes, the option to record a round is still there and

there's a network game, too.

Just as previous versions of the game had slow re-draw times on anything other than cutting-edge machines, so this version will draw slowly on anything other than a decent Pentium. This is mainly because the game calculates and draws the whole of the surrounding course from wherever your ball lands, rather than just loading one hole at a time. All the features from the old game are there - you can adjust the



(Above) Fiddle with your swing plane on the main fairway. Great!

(Above left) The game is capable of calculating the course from wherever your ball lands. Which is nice.

ball in your stance, fiddle with your swing plane, and so on. And again, the movement of the ball around the screen seems more realistic than in any other game - even the angle of the slope beneath your ball affects the flight of the shot, making it an extremely accurate simulation.

There are the same multiple camera angles from previous versions (side view, ▶



Course you can, Malcolm

The spanking new version comes with three different courses, but anyone who bought the earlier version of the game (and coughed up for any of the 6000 or so data disk add-on courses) will be very pleased to know that they can be converted to play in this. By some awesome semi-mystical process, a tree that previously had 500 leaves and a clump of moss in *Links Pro* will have 900 leaves and two clumps in this. Amazing! The only difference is that you can't use the fly-by on converted holes. Why? Because you can't. So shut it.

xt Hole



<1"

3"

Green





Links/Real Life comparison test

Just how realistic is *Links*, then? Are there things you can do that you can't do in real life, or vice versa? Here's our handy guide.

• Take a practice swing

Real life: Yes, if you're a bit of a knob-end.

Links: Yes, although it's not actually much use... except to confuse opponents by switching it on for them when they're not looking.

• Use something other than a putter on the green

Like a 5-iron, or a driver, or something to add some new contours.

Links: Yes, but the gouges don't stay there forever.

Real life: Yes, but you'd be beaten to death by the professional afterwards.

• Back the ball across onto another hole's fairway

So that when you're stuck behind the corpse of your playing partner, or something, you can face in another direction and hit it over there instead.

Links: Yes, but everyone calls you a wuss.

Real life: Yes, but everyone calls you a wuss.

• Wear a brown hat, pink shirt, orange tartan trousers and purple and green shoes

Links: No, despite our urgings to the contrary.

Real life: Yes, but you may be considered under-dressed by playing partners.

• Put the handle end of the club up your bottom and impress the chicks by playing shots behind your back

Real life: Yes, but you might want a different set of clubs afterwards.

Links: No. A mere oversight, no doubt.

top view, green view, etc), which you can customise to a certain extent and move around the screen, Windows-style. And there's Arnold Palmer, who you can play as, and who talks you through holes and courses if you want.

As for the difference between this and *PGA Europe*, they're both excellent games, but where *PGA* is a little more arcade-oriented, *Links* goes all out for simulation.

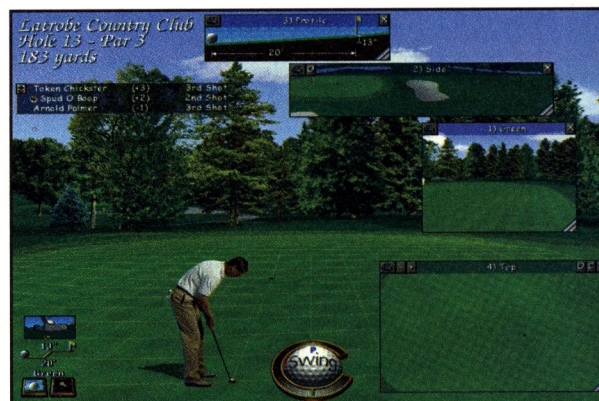
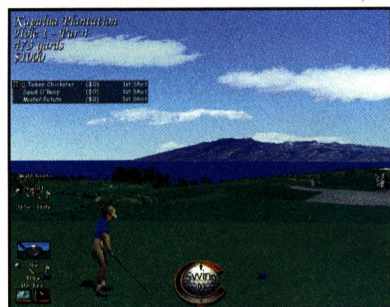
It's easier in *PGA*, for example, to chip the ball into the hole from off the green than it ought to be, and you can do stuff like work out percentages of shot distances according to club used, hit the right spot on the power gauge and get the right distance of shot. You can't do this in real life, and you can't in *Links* – the chipping, for example, is hell to judge; you can't use the markers around the power bar as set measurements, and so on. It's a lot harder to play well, but arguably 'feels' better. On the other hand, *PGA* allows you to play entire tournaments, which

is an excellent one-player option, plays more simply and looks equally good. They're both brilliant games, and in an ideal world you'd have both to play according to your mood. But if you have to choose, for financial reasons, bear the above in mind.

Ooooooh! Multimeeeja!

This being the wonderful age of multimeeeja, there are options galore, including a self-styled '3D virtual reality engine' that enables you to explore the Kapalua Clubhouse, and Arnie's house and office. I'll be honest here – I haven't actually used these facilities, and can't imagine anyone else doing so.

Let's face it, if you can't have a good rummage through people's drawers and check for sex aids hidden beneath the underwear, who can be bothered? Still, on the other hand, if you enjoy clicking on pictures of dead golfers, they're there, waiting for you. **Z**



(Above) Improve your handicap, watch the birdie and look like a right wazzuck in big trousers.

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX2/66

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Score

94

Outstanding golf sim, that's nearly as hard to play well as the real thing.

Price: £TBC **Release date:** Out now

Publisher: EIDOS Interactive

Tel: 0181-780 2222

GATEWAY2000
"You've got a friend in the business."

(Left) Maybe there's no powder room in the club house. Women's rights now!

(Below, far left) See this ball? Bet I can hit it ooooh... ever so far...

(Below left) Wear a red jumper or a blue one – it doesn't matter.

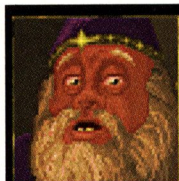


Sounds groovy

There are hundreds of sound effects in the game, each event having a particular sound associated with it. If you get a birdie, some bloke who follows you around the course, talking about what you're doing without actually showing his face, will say something vaguely praising. If you cock up a hole really badly, he'll say something snide. And any time I get to the top of my backswing at a really important moment, a penguin impersonator will fall screaming out of a nearby tree, ensuring that I slice the sodding ball into the bastard jungle and lose it forever.

The fab thing is that you can edit all these 'sound events' to your heart's content. Sounds, in the form of any .WAV file, can be added for any situation in the game, and are subdivided into in-flight, post-shot, background and even pre-post shot events. You can be extremely precise about when they should occur – by specifying, for example, that a shot has to travel less than 50 yards, start from sand and end in water. Obviously there's endless scope for japes here, whether it be simple stuff like Homer Simpson saying "Doh!" when you hit a crap shot, really specific insults, or just having Arnold Palmer swearing endlessly. This makes it perhaps the most innovative feature to be provided in a golf game in the history of mankind, ever.





Hd. Mage



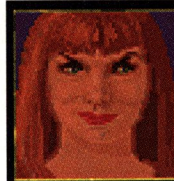
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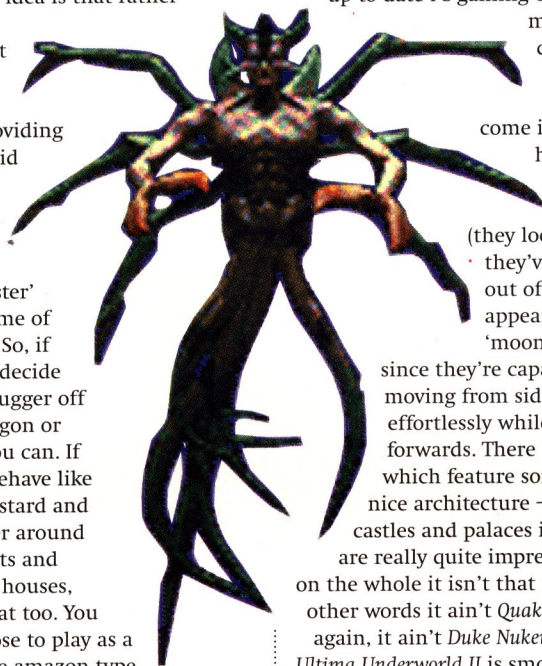


L. Bridg

Daggerfall

An RPG in which you can wander about aimlessly as a brazen and naked six-foot Amazon? That sounds right up Charlie Brooker's street. There again, p'raps not...

SO THEN, DAGGERFALL. ALSO KNOWN as 'Arena: Elder Scrolls Numero Two-o'. It's an RPG with a bit of a difference – the storyline is more or less decided by you, Mister Player Sir. The idea is that rather than setting everything out before you in an orderly fashion, ie providing you with a rigid set of 'quests', it acts more like a human 'Dungeon Master' would in a game of tabletop D&D. So, if you suddenly decide you want to bugger off and slay a dragon or something, you can. If you want to behave like a complete bastard and merely wander around picking pockets and breaking into houses, you can do that too. You can even choose to play as a six-foot blonde amazon type and stroll round shamelessly without a stitch on, if that's



(Below) It's a monster. It's a tree. Er, we don't know what it is. Whack it one anyway.



what turns you on (although bizarrely, the characters you meet are unlikely to comment on this – you won't even get an involuntary 'Phwoar!').

Point your retinas in the direction of the screenshots and you'll see that *Daggerfall* is played from a first-person perspective. As is more or less de rigueur these days, the engine will allow you to look up and down, jump, push things around, and climb. However, that's where any sort of concession to bang

up to date PC gaming end, as all the

monsters and characters you'll encounter come in the form of horrendously jerky, blocky bitmaps (they look as though they've been built out of Lego), and appear to be 'moonwalking'

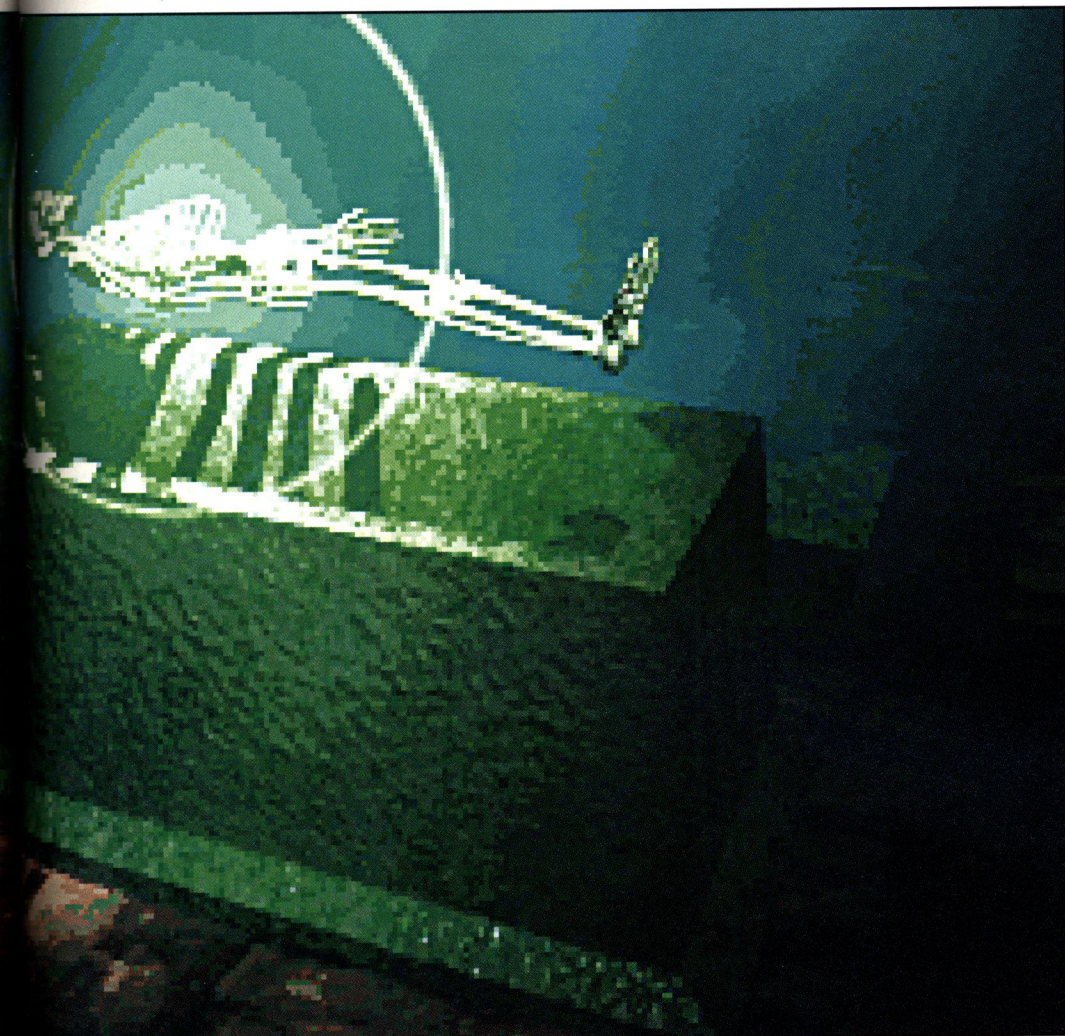
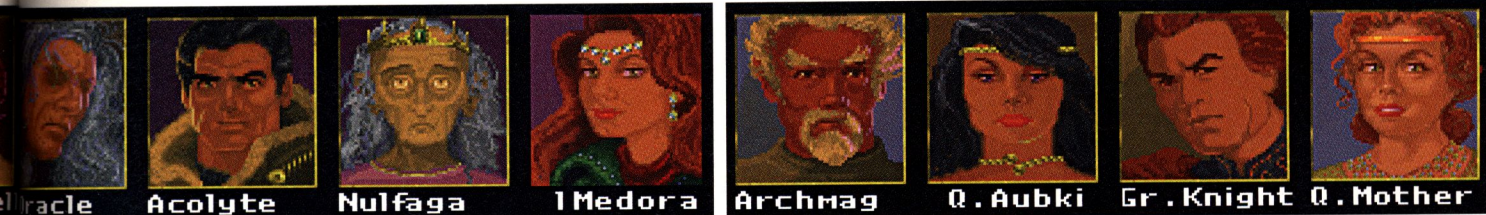
since they're capable of moving from side to side effortlessly while still facing forwards. There are sections which feature some pretty nice architecture – some of the castles and palaces in particular are really quite impressive – but on the whole it isn't that inspiring. In other words it ain't *Quake*, but then again, it ain't *Duke Nukem 3D* either. *Ultima Underworld II* is smoother and better. Put *Daggerfall* against any of today's half-decent 3D games and it looks... well, it just looks a tad dated.

Hack, slash, yawn...

Still, at least you get to swing loads of weapons and cast loads of spells, right? Er... yeah. But there's a problem here too. Despite including nice first-person representations of all the weapons, which include daggers, swords, hammers (and my own personal favourite, the bloody big mace), the combat itself is rather uninspiring. It works like this: you hold down the right mouse button and slide the mouse from left to right (to swing

at about stomach height), or up and down (to jab 'em in the guts or bring the weapon down on their head), while your opponent wobbles about in front of you in a manner reminiscent of the rubber skeletons that dangle from the roofs of fairground ghost trains. Perhaps I'm not that easily convinced, but at no point did I feel like I was actually taking part in a real fight to the death. Instead, I felt like a flailing buffoon taking swipes at an unconvincing bitmap. Presumably Mister Computer is working hard at all sorts of background 'dice-rolling' as the game works out how much damage you're inflicting, but all the same I can't help thinking that it would be about ten million times more entertaining if it could persuade you that there was at least a modicum of real-time skill required.

It's also incredibly difficult. When you start the game you'll be hard-pressed to survive an encounter with a mere rat, for god's sake. In the early



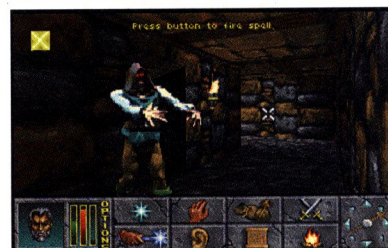
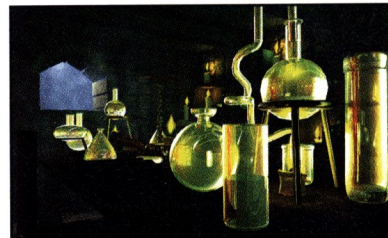
stages, your chances of ever being able to build up your character to an acceptable level seem remote to say the least. The fact that it is so difficult had an adverse effect – because I was unable to make any real progress over a lengthy period of time I got just a bit bored.

Feel the width

Daggerfall is a large game. A very, very large game. The playing area is immense – walking from one side of it to the other is inadvisable, as you'd probably expire of old age (in real life, that is) before you managed to get even half-way across. There are more villages, towns and cities than you could ask for, as well as dungeons, palaces and mountain ranges. Each town or village has its own mass of inhabitants too, so you'll never run out of people to meet (and slaughter, if that's your thang), and naturally there are shitloads of homes, taverns and shops to amble into should you see fit. That's good then. Isn't it?



Er, no. Unfortunately, none of the towns are any more interesting than say, Norwich on a wet Thursday afternoon. The inhabitants aren't much better either. They'll often ask you to do favours

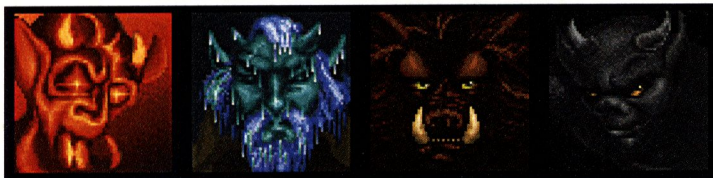


(in the form of little sub-quests), but on the whole they're pretty dull. You wouldn't want to find yourself sitting next to one of them on a long train journey – especially if you were heading towards Norwich.

Perceptive readers should be aware by now that I didn't exactly warm to *Daggerfall's* charms. I don't know, maybe it's just me. The basic concept behind the game – an 'automated' Dungeon Master, as it were – strikes me as a sound one, but one that's more or less impossible to pull off effectively on today's computers. To illustrate my point, I've provided a handy table on the next page. It's designed to do two things: (1) To highlight the limitations of *Daggerfall's* 'open-ended' structure, and (2) to irritate our art department a bit. Because I'm evil, eeeeeevil.

Oooh, you bitch, you

I'm being slightly unfair, but you get the point don't you? You see where I'm coming from. Don't get me wrong – Bethesda have taken this idea and pushed it as far as it can currently go. And besides, it's a good idea, this 'Never Ending Story' stuff. When I first heard about the concept, I was



(Above) This is from a cut-scene, and so doesn't look too bad. The in-game graphics though, are plop, and look like they've been lifted from something that came out two years ago.

genuinely impressed. Having played it though, I've changed my mind. The basic idea is still a sound one, but until it's possible to create a *genuinely* believable world inside the program, it'll never really work. What's the point in being able to go where you like and do what you want if none of it's as interesting as real life? Why include thousands of characters if there's very little to distinguish between them, bar a few variables? Why set out to emulate a real

human Dungeon Master if it's not possible to emulate the human mind first? Use of a rigid, linear storyline may not be entirely compatible with the hard-core *Dungeons & Dragons* ethos, but at least it ensures that the player always has a sense of purpose and direction and that there's

always something really interesting going on. The sprawling narrative of *Daggerfall* will never hang together as neatly as a story that someone's sat down and written. The game does have a main 'quest' behind it – even if it is almost a token gesture – but before long you're bogged down in all the periphery and it all starts to feel a little disjointed. The only way this kind of game could merit any success would be as a kind of Internet-based MUD in which each of the characters you meet is 'played' by a real live person who's also dialled in. But it doesn't work like that, and it shows.

Well, that's my opinion, and many

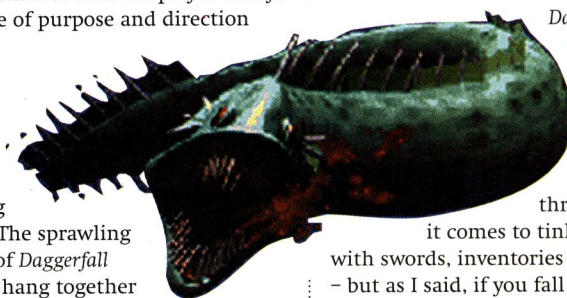


of you may disagree. If you just luuurrrve the whole 'Sword and Sorcery' mythos, and the prospect of guiding your own character to whatever fate you see fit appeals to you, then you might want to give this a look. If you're a hardened RPG enthusiast who's looking for a game that emulates the *D&D* experience as closely as possible, given the technology

currently available,

Daggerfall may very well fit you right down to a tee. I've got a fairly low boredom threshold when

it comes to tinkering about with swords, inventories and hit points – but as I said, if you fall into the *D&D* camp you may well find that *Daggerfall* is right up your alley. **Z**



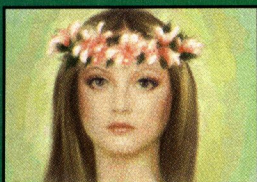
The handy table thing

An effective 'open-ended' RPG would need:

1. Plenty of interesting, varied quests with unpredictable twists which slowly but steadily build to a crescendo of excitement.
2. Loads of believable characters wandering around, each one looking totally different and complete with their own unique speech pattern and outlook on life.
3. Hundreds of utterly unique towns and cities, each with its very own style of architecture, culture, and er... you know, stuff like that. Interesting places.
4. Something that doesn't feel like it's being randomly generated by the computer, and is therefore fascinating.

In *Daggerfall*, what you actually get are:

1. Quests which, while initially interesting, soon become repetitive and boring.
2. Lots of similar-looking people with very poor conversational skills.
3. Some very nice locations, and lots of almost identical, uninteresting ones.
4. Something that feels like it's been randomly generated by the computer, with the result that it's a bit on the dull side after a while.



Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX/66

Graphics: VGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Score

65

Nice idea. Shame it doesn't quite come off.

Price: £TBC Release date: Out now

Publisher: Virgin Interactive/Bethesda

Tel: 0171-368 2255

GATEWAY2000
"You've got a friend in the business."



The follow up to the
award-winning
Apache Longbow
"Simulation of the Year"
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BETTER RED ***THAN DEAD***

The Hind is the most formidable frontline helicopter gunship in the Soviet military machine; uglier than a hunchback from Hell & meaner than Yeltsin with a hangover. Now you can fly the helicopter nicknamed "The Bogeyman" by NATO pilots, in campaigns across Afghanistan, Kazakhstan & Korea. Fly head-to-head against the formidable Apache Longbow™ in the first link in DI's Virtual Battlefield™ series. With realistic & arcade modes, highly detailed graphics, interactive ground troops, & riveting gameplay, playing Hind™ is probably the most exciting pastime since Russian Roulette.



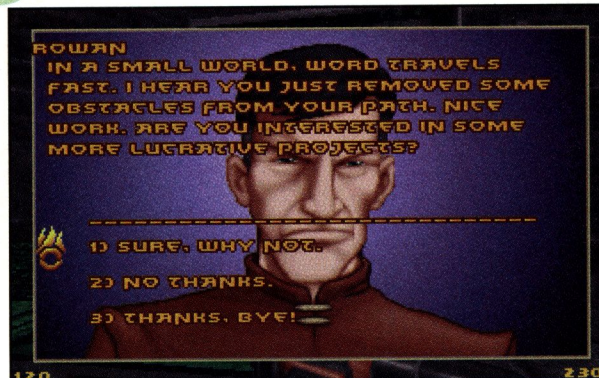
Strife

Always the bridesmaid, never the bride. While everyone else gets to mess with *Quake*, Paul Presley gets to mess with a second-rate *Doom* clone.



THE STRUGGLE FOR DOMINANCE in the world of *Doom* clones continues... "Wait for me!" cried Strife, struggling to pull on his jacket and tie up his laces as he ran after the *Doom* bandwagon. As the vehicle picked up speed, the young pretender thought he wasn't going to make it aboard, but as luck would have it the wagon suddenly slowed as an elderly couple walked across the road in front of it. With one last desperate effort, Strife leapt for the base plate at the rear of the wagon, hoping against hope to grab on and join the party...

When iD announced that they were to allow third-party developers to use their well-tested *Doom* engine a while back, the games industry must have thought all its Christmasses had come at once. Finally, here was a chance to get their hands on the golden apple. Who could have realised that it was merely gold-plating and that the really precious material was still to come in the form of *Quake*? So now that the mighty leviathan has hit town you'd have to wonder who's going to be foolish, er, brave enough to release a game using the old code, don't you?



Step forward... Velocity!

Well you have to admire their chutzpah, if nothing else. I don't mean to sound snobbish, but when you're playing a game which causes people passing by every five minutes to say, "It's not exactly *Quake*, is it?" you can't help but wonder why you're bothering with it.

And that's what's slightly grating. Beneath the rough-hewn, somewhat outdated exterior that is the *Doom* engine, there lies quite a nice game. Admittedly, Velocity have tried to add a few new twists to the affair, such as including an actual story to go along with the carnage and the ability to talk to people rather than just shoot them. That's right - TALK! You remember, it's what sets us apart from the animals.

It'll never catch on

The best label to attach to *Strife* is that it's perhaps what *Doom 2* should have been, which was really nothing more than a collection of extra levels and a shotgun. *Strife* marries the idea of the basic first-person perspective action game with some of the best elements of the traditional role-playing games

(Above left) What *Doom* clone would be complete without a flamethrower? And look at 'em burn! Wooh-hooh! (Calm down - Ed.)

(Above) The option to talk to people allows an actual storyline to be integrated with the violence. Coo, whatever next?

(Above right) The story is similar to *Star Wars*. An evil empire is ruling the land and only this plucky band of rebels can save the day. As a mercenary, whose side will you choose to fight for?



we were seeing at the start of this decade (remember *Ultima VI* and *VIII* anyone?). Unfortunately these are both dying breeds, victims of technological progress and decaying attention spans. Nobody wants to think anymore, it's all Shoot! Shoot! Shoot! Kill! Kill! Kill! Personally I blame MTV, but then what right-thinking person doesn't?

Strife leapt and just managed to grasp the wood with his fingertips as the vehicle started forward again with a lurch. Helped by the hands of the passengers, the plucky young game was pulled aboard and finally joined the *Doom* bandwagon as it rolled out of town. Unfortunately that was when the mighty *Quake* hit the ground and the bandwagon instantly fell into a huge crevice and was never seen again. Such is the inevitable march of progress... **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX/66

Graphics: VGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, joystick, keyboard

Score

70

Interesting enough, but overshadowed by You Know Who.

Price: £39.99 Release Date: September

Publisher: Velocity/3D0

Tel: 0181-296 1949

GATEWAY2000
"You've got a friend in the business."

(Left) Well, you have to choose the rebels really. If not you just end up in a massive firefight with all and sundry and no hope of escape.

LINKS LS

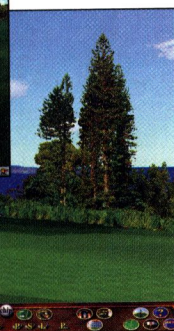
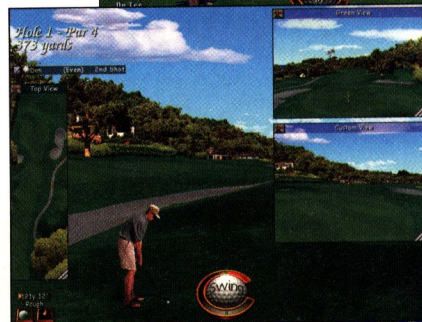
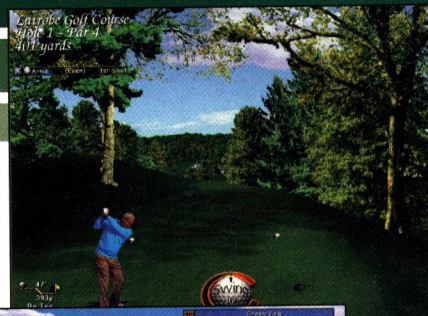
LINKS, the greatest golf simulation ever produced for home computer, teams up with the legendary **Arnold Palmer** at his home course, **The Latrobe Country Club**, to bring you **LINKS LS — Legends In Sport**.

LINKS LS is the brand new benchmark golf simulation for your Personal Computer by which all others will continue to be judged. We've teamed up with the legendary Grand Master of golf, Arnold Palmer to bring you 54 championship holes from three award winning courses! Tee off as, or against the digitised Mr. Palmer who not only looks and sounds like Arnie, but plays with the same style and tenacity that defined him as a golfing legend! Watch the ball fly, the divots launch and the tee break off as you choose between two glorious Hawaiian Island courses at Kapalua or Arnold Palmer's home course - The Latrobe Country Club.

LINKS LS features:

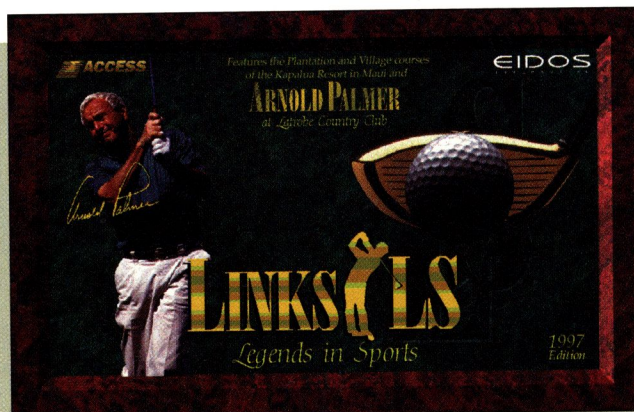
• Unlimited screen resolutions and up to 16.7 million colours

- Complete course accuracy - we've photographed every square metre of terrain for each Links LS course
- New control panel with an even easier interface with automatic prompts
- In-flight ball tracking which enables you to track your shot's flight path
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 - Multiple camera windows and custom viewing positions that allow you to view shots from tee, green and above on-screen at one time
 - Four golfers including Arnold Palmer. Watch them show elation or pain after a good or bad shot!
- Aerial flybys that allow you to view each hole using True Motion-S Video™
- Supports all previous SVGA LINKS championship courses
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- 16 bit stereo sound
- Fully compatible with Window '95 and MS-DOS



PC Gamer 94% Game of the Month
PC Guide 6/6 Game of the Month

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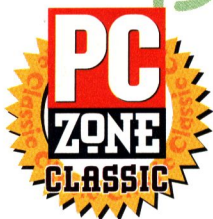


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The Pandora Directive



All his life Chris Anderson has wanted to be a private detective. Fortunately for the rest of the world, writing this review is as close as he's ever going to get.

(Below left) Scientists play about with the remains of an alien...

(Below centre) ...and here he is close-up. Cute, isn't he?

(Below right) Tex sensibly legs it after blowing up half of San Francisco.

IT'S FUNNY HOW PEOPLE SEEM TO think that the life of a private detective is highly glamorous, filled with danger, and full of excellent life-risking opportunities. In reality, your average P.I. is more likely to be spending his time scouring the country for missing persons, or shadowing some middle-aged bum

who's cheating on his wife, or rescuing a cat from a tree or something. The only place you're likely to find a detective who fits the traditional image is on tv in some dodgy program or other, or in a movie, or maybe even a book, or of course, in *The Pandora Directive*...

Tex Is back

The Pandora Directive, you may be interested to know, is the sequel to *Under A Killing Moon*, which is a rather splendid adventure game chronicling the life and times of Tex Murphy. Tex is a private detective who has a most unfortunate knack of getting into all kinds of shitty situations no matter what he does. Your job, as you would expect, is to save his skin when such situations arise. Personally speaking,

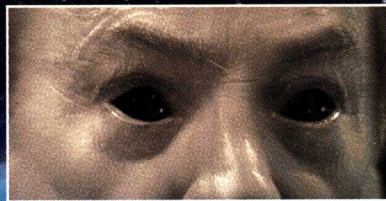
I didn't have too much trouble helping Tex survive all his traumatic encounters, but there's

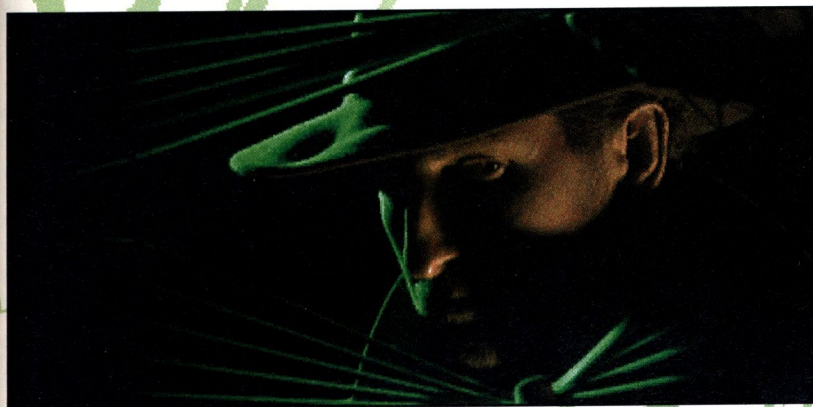
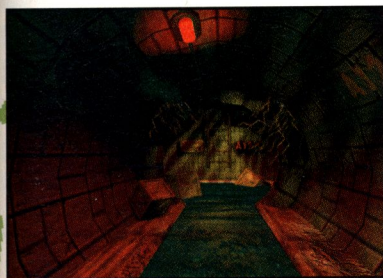
a reason for that. Virgin sent me a novel which is based on everything that happens in the game. I decided to have a little peek at this novel to see what it was all about. Unfortunately, the book, in addition to having exactly the same storyline as the game, actually turned out to be rather good, so by the time I got round to reviewing the game, I was already halfway through the book. As you can probably imagine, it's not that much of a challenge playing an adventure game in which you already know exactly what to do.

Fortunately, I've now got quite close to the end of the game, so I've had to solve lots of puzzles myself (honest guv), so you needn't worry about this review being based on a walkthrough of the game or anything like that. Anyway, the moral of this long and boring story is (*At last!* -Ed.): if you're thinking of playing the game, DON'T READ THE BOOK. I'm glad that's sorted out, let's move on to a bit of scene-setting, shall we?

They've seen The X-Files

Explaining the overall plot is going to be a little difficult, seeing as how there are three completely different paths you can take in order to finish the game. Basically, the nub of it is this. At the start of the game, Tex gets approached by a wealthy businessman who is trying to track down an old friend of his, Dr Malloy. Tex takes on the case and quickly finds out there's more to the doctor's disappearance than meets the eye. The NSA, a government agency, are particularly interested in finding out where the doctor is hiding, as are the police who want to find out the





link between the doctor and a serial killer known as the black arrow killer. I really have to stop here, because if I give too much of the story away (which is basically the best thing about the game), there won't be much point in any of you playing the thing. Suffice to say, Tex discovers during his investigations that the answer to the whole mystery lies in finding out the truth about an alien craft which crashed in the States and the government are keeping quiet about.

In perspective

As you can see, *Under A Killing Moon* is still pretty good even by today's standards, but understandably it doesn't quite match up to its own sequel. *Gabriel Knight 2* is cool too, but isn't quite classic material. *The Pandora Directive* is by far and away the best 'interactive movie' in the whole wide world, but as an adventure game in its own right, it doesn't have the lasting appeal of *Countdown*, which is still one of the best adventure games of all time. So there.

Countdown

The Pandora Directive

Under A Killing Moon

Gabriel Knight 2

At times, it's almost like playing an interactive episode of *The X-Files*, which as we all know is absolutely tops. So the storyline is fab, what about the rest of it? Well, hey guys, what do you think? *The Pandora Directive* is, after all, an adventure game from the talented guys and gals at Access.

Access are back

Before Sierra and Virgin and almost every other software house under the sun jumped on the interactive movie bandwagon, Access were already busy producing totally class adventure games using photo-realistic back-drops and digitised animations for the in-game characters. The first of these was *Countdown*, an absolutely brilliant adventure game with a gripping plot and enough gameplay to keep you

going for months – and how many interactive movies can you say that about? Access then went on to produce *Amazon*, which was another top game (even at this point the interactive movie brigade still hadn't got off the starting block), and then of course came *Under A Killing Moon*, the game that preceded *The Pandora Directive*. *Under A Killing Moon* was rather excellent (we gave it 90) and you'll be happy to know that the game under review here is even better still. The graphics, as you would expect, are absolutely gorgeous, and the gameplay is so addictive I've had serious trouble dragging myself away from the game.

The Pandora Directive triumphs because it contains 'real' puzzles and genuinely challenging gameplay, as well as all the



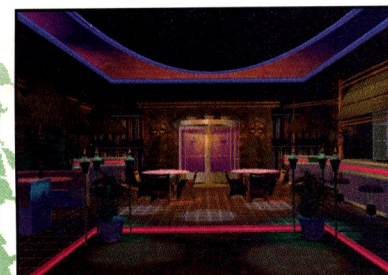
(Top left) The game's full of little puzzles like this one.

(Centre left) Hint: stuck for cash? Take a look around the sewer.

(Left) It's Tex, innit?

(Right) Identify this screenshot and win yourself a prize. Probably.

usual interactive movie malarkey. The only problem I had with it was the fact that it comes on six CDs (yes, six!), and you have to swap between them quite regularly (remember the Amiga, anyone?). But on no account let small details like that put you off, *The Pandora Directive* is without question the best adventure game of its type currently available. I loved it. **Z**



Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX/66

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

(Below) This is Chelsee. Tex is crazy about her, but he's too much of a wanker for her to give him the time of day.

(Below right) As you can see, the backgrounds are suitably posh and impressive.



Score

92

Another winner from Access.

Price: £TBA Release date: September

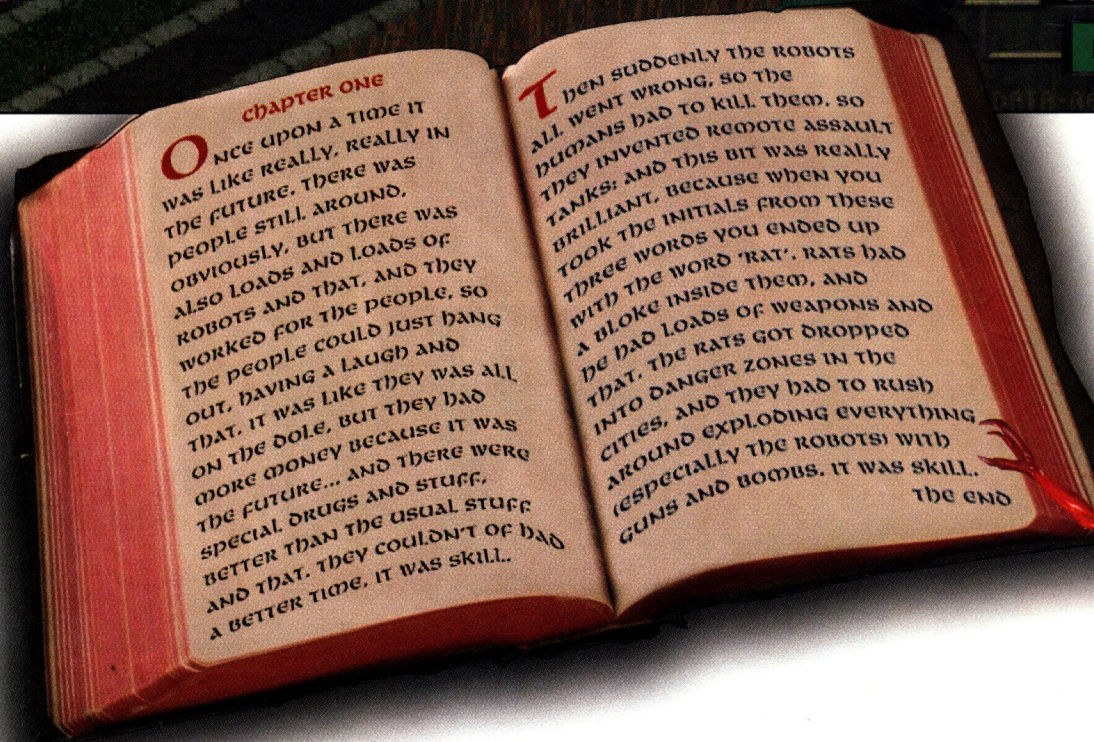
Publisher: Virgin

Tel: 0171-368 2255

GATEWAY2000
"You've got a friend in the business."



Bedlam



(Above) The game that inspired the book.

(Left) The book that was inspired by the game.

Duncan MacDonald never gets out of bed before 11.30 in the morning, and – this is entirely unconnected – he once, with a chum called Steve, kidnapped a sheep from a field in Surrey (100% true) and took it for a ride in Steve's Vauxhall Viva. This makes him the ideal person to review *Bedlam* from *Mirage*. (That was pathetic – Ed.)

TO START AT THE BEGINNING, I'D better fill you in on *Bedlam*'s plot. (Heeelp! – A reader.) It's like the future, right? And there's loads of robots, right? And it's like, er, well... actually how about I save myself some typing time here and ask you to read the opening (and closing) chapter of the novel *Bedlam – Robots And Explosions*, as written by Joshua Q Zoop (a not very good sci-fi writer) on the page opposite instead... Finished? Good.

So it's a shoot 'em up – yes?

Sort of. But before continuing, can I just quickly mention that we have here – at PC Zone – the entire works of Joshua Q Zoop? And that we're willing to literally 'give them away'? It's true. We actually 'don't want them'. Send an SAE to the usual Zone address, and mark your envelope "Joshua Q Zoop is skill". You'll receive his complete works by return of post, and what's more, the first 'entrant' will also receive (free of charge) a charming* carriage clock.

But back to *Bedlam*. Okay, so it's a sort of shoot 'em up. In fact it is a shoot 'em up.

I know all this, I played the demo...

Aha! I forgot: last month there was a massive playable level of *Bedlam* on the cover disc, wasn't there? Hmmm. But I'm still not rendered entirely redundant, because (a) you may be an old-fashioned no-hoper without a CD-ROM drive, (b) you may only have 4MB of RAM, meaning you were equally jiggered, (c) you may be a new reader, or (d) you might have lost your cover disc before experiencing the *Bedlam* phenomenon.

And even if none of the above do apply, there's still an (e), which goes something like this: you don't know what happened next, seeing as there was just the one level. Ho ho ho! You thought you knew it all, didn't you? (And, er, maybe you do, but read on regardless.)

*ie horrible.

Barry the R.A.T. goes a-killing



Barry: Hi there, robot chums! How's it going?
Robot 1: Eh? How come you're being so friendly?
Robot 2: Yeah! You're here to try to kill us, aren't you?
Barry: Nothing of the sort. I'm just out for a stroll. You blokes have just got suspicious minds, that's your trouble.
Robot 3: Sorry. Look, how about you join us for a drink then?



Robot 14: Mmmm. Okay then. Holster your guns, lads.
Barry: Whoops! I don't believe it. Sorry! Oh no!
Robot 19 (from behind wall): I saw that!
Barry: It was an accident! My Reaper missiles went off unexpectedly!
Robot 19: What about those grenades you were chucking?
Barry: They just fell out of my pocket and sort of bounced off my hand. Honest! I'm trying to make friends with you.



Barry: Whoops!
Robots 1 thru 7: Yaaaaaaaarrrrrgh!!!!
Barry: Sorry about that lads, it was an accident.
Robot 8: What do you mean an *accident*? You just wiped out all my mates!
Barry: Look, nobody could feel worse about it than me... I've got to live with this for the rest of my life. I don't know how I'll cope.



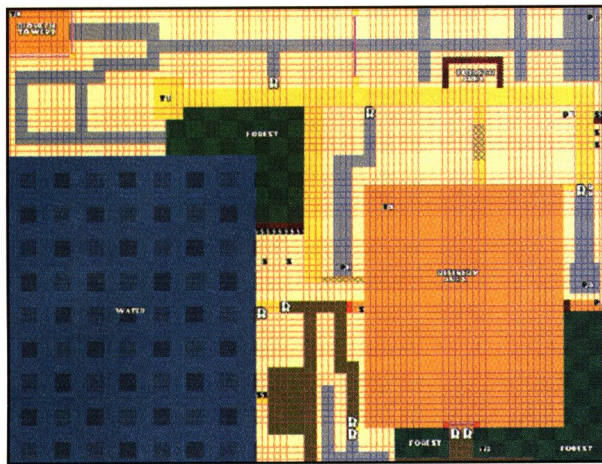
Barry: Careful chaps, you'll get hurt walking through that fire...
Robot 82: Not half as hurt as you'll be in a minute, pal!
Barry: Uuuh? What's with the attitude?
Robot 83: You totalled some of our best friends!
Barry: On my Auntie Maude's grave, it was a complete accident.
Robot 82: Hmmm. Well, you look quite honest...



Barry: Oh, hi chaps! Blimey, what's the hurry?
Robot 12: We're not happy. We heard through the grapevine that you killed some of our chums!
Barry: Oh – *that*! It was a complete accident, I assure you.
Robot 13: An accident? Really? Do you promise?
Barry: Yes, I promise. I just want to be friends, you guys.



Barry: Whoops-a-daisy!
Robot 99: You bastard! You pissing shitwank!
Barry: Language, language. It wasn't my fault.
Robot 99: Not your fault? How can you just stand there and say it's not your fault? We're dying here! You called in an airstrike for christ's sake!
Barry: Not necessarily, but anyway, the important point here is that I didn't do it on purpose... (Cont. page 942)



« It looks a bit like Syndicate

Most mags have done the inevitable *Syndicate* comparison, so let's do a breakdown, bit by bit, comparing the two. (And if you don't know what *Syndicate* is you'll be buggered for the whole of this section. I can only apologise...)

FRONT END:

Syndicate: Plough dosh into various aspects of your operation. Then do loads of other stuff for, erm, an hour.

Bedlam: Fill your RAT up with weapons.

Scores: *Syndicate*: complicated.

Bedlam: piss easy.

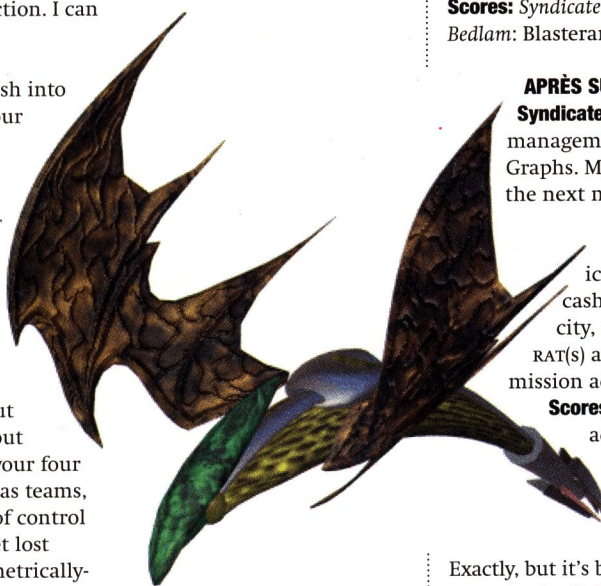
MAIN GAME:

Syndicate: Move about slowly, worrying about whether to control your four sprites individually, as teams, or en-masse. Heaps of control icons to toy with. Get lost behind loads of isometrically-viewed structures. Kill things. Search bodies. Cause explosions. Use brain. Check scanner.

Bedlam: Slide about at a zillion mph and shoot everything that moves (or doesn't move). If it doesn't explode then it's pick-uppable: cash booster, energy bar refiller, speed-up, ammo replenishment, etcetera. Meanwhile look for switches which open up hitherto unreachable areas of the level. Check scanner.

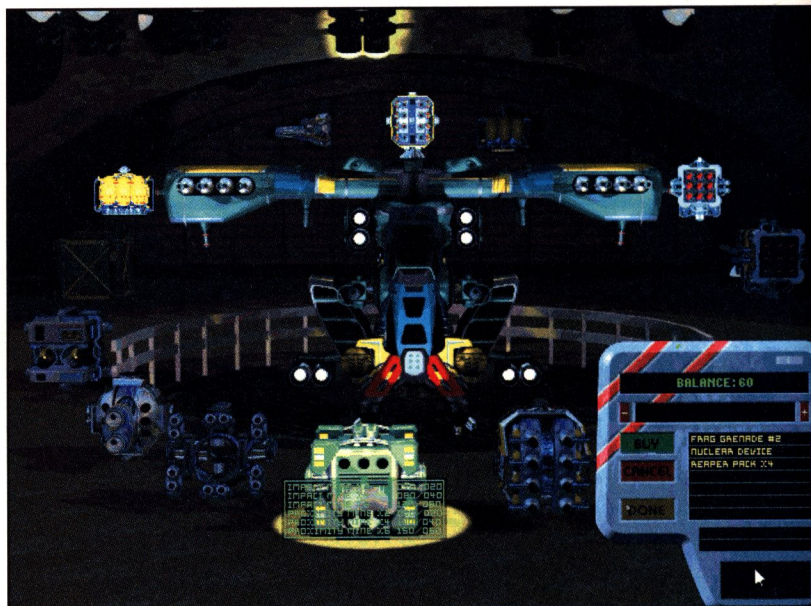
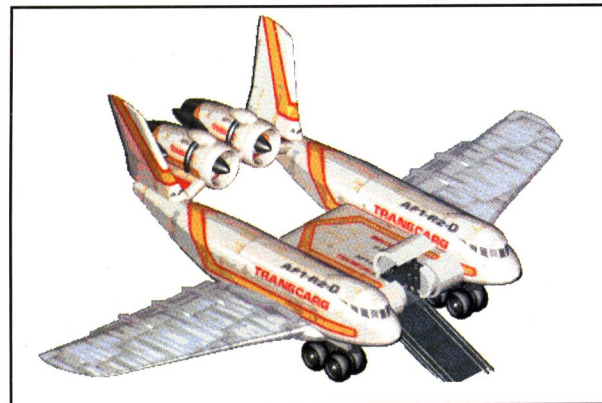
(Above) The patchwork quilt of the book of the game.

(Right) The arming screen, based on the quilt and the book.



(Below) A futuristic Thunderbird Two-ish aeroplane.

(Below right) The futuristic Thunderbird Two-ish plane after you've lobbed two dozen grenades up its chuff.



Develop mouse-induced RSI.

Scores: *Syndicate*: Deeply engrossing. *Bedlam*: Blasterama.

APRÈS SUCCESS:

Syndicate: More resource management. Graphs. Aspirins. Graphs. More aspirins. Choose the next mission accordingly.

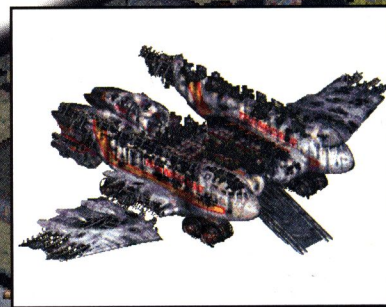
Bedlam: Did you find the 'new weapon' icons? And all the cash bonuses? Gung-ho city, then! Arm up your RAT(s) and choose the next mission accordingly.

Scores: *Syndicate*: Highly addictive.

Bedlam: Highly addictive.

Okay, so it's not Syndicate

Exactly, but it's bloody good nevertheless: never in the field of human conflict has one sprite been attacked by so many others (or something). And the levels are huge... 25 of them, in five different playing zones. If there's a problem with the game - and this is probably a personal thing - it's that your main character 'slides' too much. He's meant to be gliding on air-jets, I know, but I think this is a cop-out on the part of the programmers to save giving him legs



and therefore a satisfyingly 'clunky' gait. (Yeah, great theory - Ed.) Another mild whinge is the necessity to find switches, which are bastards to locate at times due to the gigantic-ness of the levels. (And yes, I know switches and stuff bring in a 'maze' element which is satisfying once sussed, but you know what I mean, especially after like half an hour of searching.)

Still for sheer non-stop action... tops!

Oh, and just in case you're equipped, I'd better quickly mention the multi-player capabilities: up to 12 networked people in either co-operative mode (yawn) or deathmatch (hoorah). **Z**

Tech specs

Memory: 8Mb

Processor: 486DX/33

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Note: Windows 95 or MS-DOS required

Score

89

Destroy everything.
Power-ups! Excellent!

Price: £TBC **Release date:** Late September

Publisher: Mirage

Tel: 01260 299909

GO! NEWAY 2000

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The sequel to Crusader:
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Unleash your wrath and
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freeze, shatter, vapourise
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YOU'D REGRET MISSING IT.



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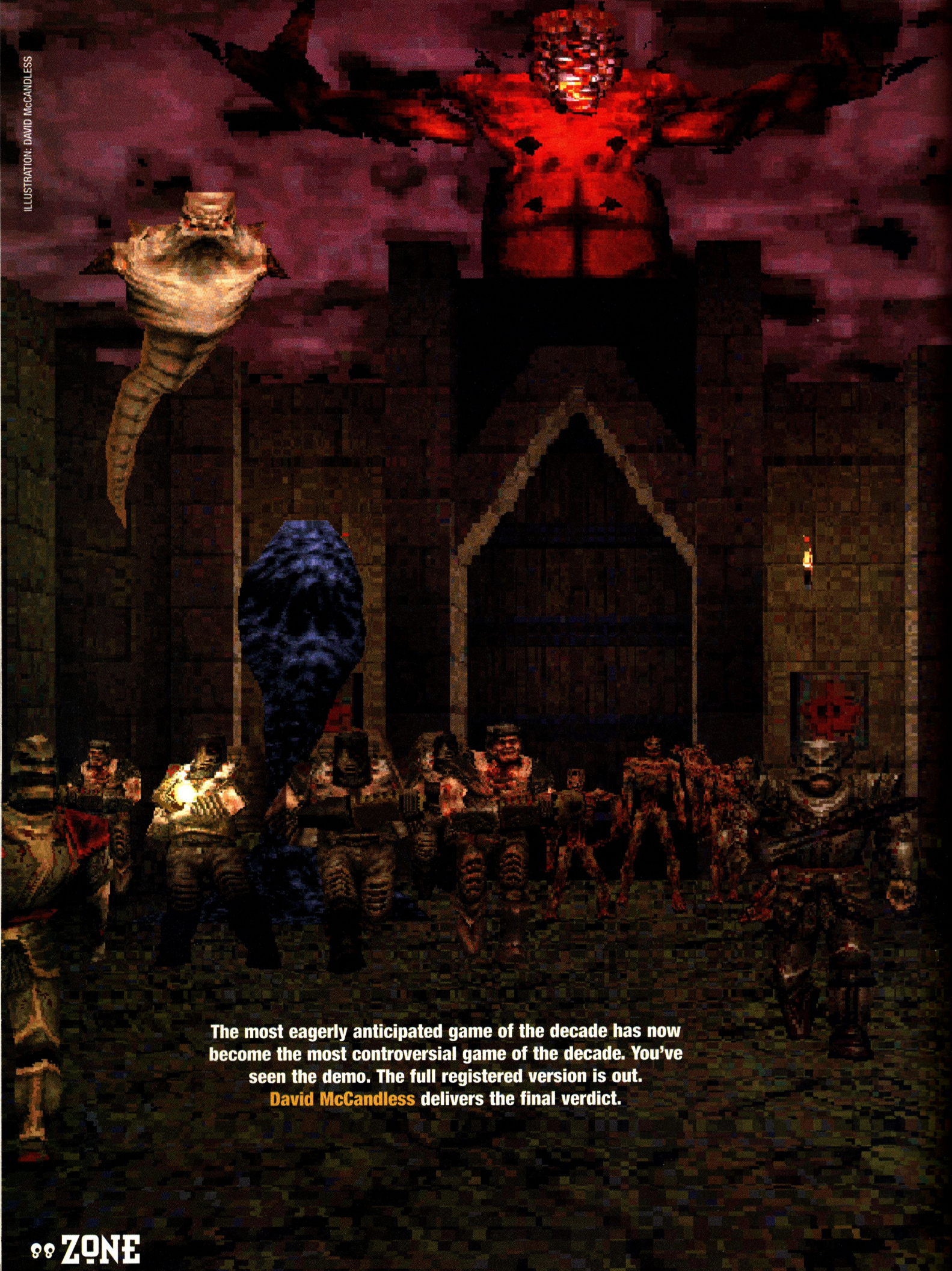
THE NEXT + CHAPTER



<http://www.ea.com> • For more information about Crusader No Remorse, please telephone
01753 546 465, email uk-support@ea.com, or write to Electronic Arts, P.O. Box 835, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8XU.



ILLUSTRATION: DAVID McCANDLESS



The most eagerly anticipated game of the decade has now become the most controversial game of the decade. You've seen the demo. The full registered version is out. **David McCandless** delivers the final verdict.

QUAKE

PC
ZONE
CLASSIC





QKAY, okay. we've been down on our knees in front of this game for months now. Nary has an issue of *Zone* gone by in the last year without some mention of *Quake*, or spoooge, or some hideously sticky combination of both. We wanted you to share the vice-like anticipation which clenched our testicles, our incessant reciting of Football League Tables and the Lords Prayer, that stinging feeling, watering eyes, cold showers. We just wanted you to share that with us. Now the wait is over. You've allocated a portion of your spoooge reservoir for the shareware version. You've seen the bare bones of *Quake* – the engine, the weapons, monsters, the architecture. Now, we're here to tell you how much cooler, and better, and spankier the full version of *Quake* is. Capisce?

Extra! Extra!

In traditional iD fashion, the registered version of *Quake* features extra monsters, extra weapons and bloody loads of extra levels – 47 in total. There are the eight levels of the Dimension Of The Doomed, the shareware episode, plus another 24 architecture meisterworks forming the next three arenas – The Realm Of Black Magic, The NetherWorld, and The ElderWorld. Complete all these and you'll be granted access to the final level and a personal audience with Shub-Niggurath, the grisly gorelord



of the *Quake* universe. And then to round everything off, there are six, monsterless deathmatch stadiums.

Each episode has its very own look and feel, each one sculpted by iD Software's in-house maestros – John Romero, American McGee, Sandy

Peterson and Tim Willits. You've probably already experienced the joys of the first episode – the futuristic, grunt-packed SlipGate Complex, the malevolently convoluted Necropolis, the stunning Gloom Keep, and the twisted, nightmarish Door To Cthon. ("Aarrghh... lava!" you probably screamed as you visited the volcano god for the 700th time.) The new levels take the glorious architecture and arcane deathtraps and expand them beyond anything you'd expect. Beyond anything you'd want to expect.

Each episode starts in a futuristic space base, packed with shotgun-wielding grunts and laser-toting enforcers. Electricity hums in the background. The walls are grimy and stained with the salsa of recent bloodbaths. The fluorescent lighting flickers on and off. You think *Doom*, but then *Doom* didn't have underwater sewage systems, sons of bitches snipers on high, and the darkest scariest shadows in Christendom.

The second episode – The Realm Of Black Magic – comes from the highly warped skull of John Romero, the guy responsible for *Doom*'s more esoteric moments. The world contains a range of castles, from the wiry, multi-layered medieval Ogre Citadel with its stained glass windows and sandstone walls to the Crypt Of Decay where you spend



John's opinion

Bloody hell... I don't think I've ever seen a game induce passions in quite the way that *Quake* does and to be completely honest I am getting completely sick of the *Quake* vs *Duke* debate which now seems to have been going on forever. When it comes down to it, *Quake* has a far superior graphics engine – and that's a fact. You can't argue with it, it's irrefutable. As far as everything else goes it's pretty much down to personal opinion of the way the game actually treats you. In *Duke* you have a character forced upon you, while in *Quake* you play, well, yourself really. Personally I prefer the *Quake* experience a lot more... and I'm just saying this because of anything to do with the multi-player aspects of the game (although if you get the opportunity to try it... it really is worth it). I find the *Quake* experience far more absorbing, frenetic and basically exciting. It's a game that manages to induce a true emotional reaction and it does this by throwing things at you at a pace just beyond that which you would normally be able to handle and in a manner that is more realistic than any other game out there. Sure, I'll agree with anyone that *Duke* gives you far much more 'to do', but iD's game tickles that bit of your brain that *Doom* managed to all those years ago.

If you've only played the shareware version of the game it really does have to be said that you don't have a full picture as to what this is all about. The full version of *Quake* is not only huge, but offers some distinctly different level designs that range from trap-laden passageways that require you to creep around to vast rooms that allow you to just belt around at top whack wasting anything that moves. At the end of the day all that can be said is what we've said before – *Quake* rocks. *Quake* is indeed pour hommes.



half
the

time
drowning
in the moat,
and half the time
suspended on parapets

being pummelled by needle darts. And dying. The penultimate level, Wizard's Manse, is a true work of art, a deadly spiral of walkways and bridges, gradually leading you by the spine further and further up to a massive confrontation with a bundle of fiends.

The NetherWorld has been designed by American McGee. Crazy name, crazy levels. In the Vaults Of Zinn every step is a trap.

Every lift carries a hundred monsters. Every monster carries a hundred grenades. Every grenade has your name etched on its surface. In sputum. Satan's Dark Delight is another classic. Half the level is flooded. The rest is suspended above oceans of totally deadly lava. Unpredictable lifts drag you towards crushing ceilings. Doors, roof tops and floors crack open at the scariest of moments, upchucking hundreds of zombies, ogres and fiends in your direction. A lovely, juicy suit of armour beckons from a gently lit pedestal. Grab it and the lights snap out, except for a single bolt of lighting from the single shambler who's just teleported in for a chat. In the Tomb Of Terror, the secrets are hidden in the shadows, on the roof tops, or under the lava. Survive all this and you have to face the Wind Tunnels, where huge conduits suck you up and pinball around the level, like a blackened bogey ball flicked around an office.

The final episode is a sprawling nightmare. The Tower Of Despair is a labyrinth of death, with ogres in cages, huge murals on the walls, and a massive corridor maze with collapsing floors and dark, dark shadows. To follow that is The Elder God Shrine which sports an excellent zombie graveyard, complete with tombstones and open graves. The final two levels - The Maze Of Pain and Azure Agony - are going to have you praying for a map.

Thick viscous shadows, endless overlapping hallways and balconies, armies of vores, shamblers and fiends, and nasty, nasty traps. By the end of this, you'll be on your hands and knees, weeping, snot evacuating from every orifice.



Paul Presley's opinion

Speaking as the UK's official World's Worst Doom Player, you'll understand that my initial reaction to the news that iD were developing an even better version of the popular chainsaw 'em up was to flee in terror, hide under the bedcovers and pretend that computer games didn't exist. What? Another chance to humiliate myself in front of my peers and show to the world how bad I am playing action games? Frankly, I needed it like I needed another series of *Goodnight Sweetheart*.

But then I played it. And it succeeded where the bitter-sweet adventures of Nicholas Lyndhurst failed - I was hooked. *Duke Nukem 3D* was a fun diversion from *Doom*, but there's an atmosphere surrounding *Quake* that hasn't been felt since the day I first played the classic gore-fest. It's not just the total freedom of movement that creates this, but the fact that it integrates so well with the design of the game. Levels are festooned with walkways at all sorts of heights which suddenly creates a feeling of three-dimensional gameplay that I have *never* experienced before.

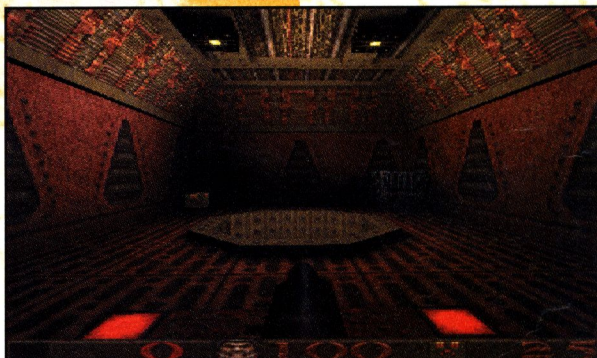
The best games in the world are the ones that cause you to become totally immersed in their world. *Quake* sucked me in and hasn't let go yet. I'm still crap at it and regularly get my arse kicked in deathmatches, but at least I'm enjoying myself.



Paul Ditta's opinion

I'm going to get mailed dog shit for this but what the hell. *Quake*: the most important game ever? I don't think so. Technically flawless *Doom* clone? Hmmm, that seems more like it.

Quake is cool, *Quake* is spooky and atmospheric and brilliantly realised and all that, but what *Quake* isn't is original. Originality is what made *Doom* kick the gameplaying world in its collective soft bits and take notice. *Quake* favours multi-player action, fine if you have access to a network or can afford to play it over the net, tough titty otherwise. Better than *Duke Nukem*? Who gives a shit? *Quake* is no more playable, it just looks a whole lot better and as anyone will tell you, looks aren't everything. (At least that's what my more sympathetic friends tell me.) I'm willing to wager that many people have played the shareware version and are saying to themselves, "Okay, it looks great, but what is all the fuss about?"



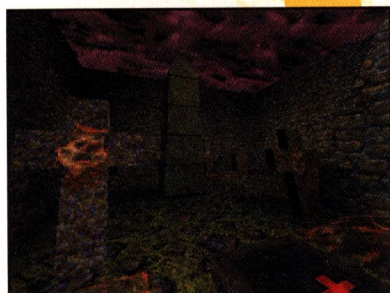


Sound effects

So far, so Doom, you may be mumbling to your mummy. True. *Quake* is Doom. No doubt about it. But it's Doom pared down to the marrow, the gameplay gristle stripped to white gleaming bone, and then rebuilt, fleshed out with a new body, a new engine, new graphics, and entire limbs of atmosphere. Turn the light off. Stick your headphones on. Disconnect the phone. And scream, and jump, and gibber, and squint, and sweat your way through the levels. You'll never get adrenaline dumps like this from any other game.

Take the sound, for example. It is incredible, and 3D spaced for extra realism. Each monster has its own gruesome intestinal howl as a call signal. Spawn make this inhuman squelching sound as they bounce like evil space hoppers around the scenery – the sound of a hundred sweaty bottoms stuck to a hundred plastic chairs. Zombies groan as they reincarnate, squelching as they pull flesh from their arse to throw at you.

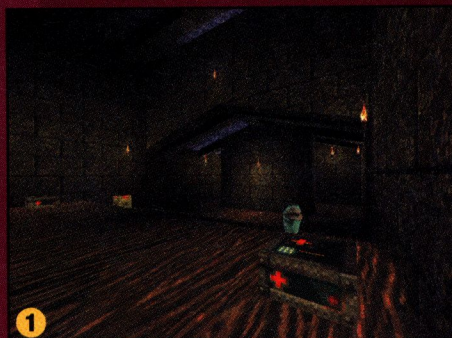
Knights, waving their swords at you, make this masturbatory kind of grunt. The vores scream and shriek like the girly spiders that they are, Ogres roar and metallically ping-pong pipe bombs in your direction. A distant shambler's



The Dismal Oubliette

"I am the UberFragMeister, Emperor of Doom, and BaronBane™. So, if *Quake* is merely a Doom clone, I shall be the QuakeMeister, The Gibber General, and Shambler Seer-toer." (Well, you try and come up with a suitable title – it's not as easy as it looks.) These are just a couple of my arrogant thoughts as I entered the second episode of *Quake* – *The Realm Of Black Magic*. And yeah, pretty verily did I walk through the valley of shadow and feel no ill. A couple of seconds of pain. A few moments of pure incandescent terror. Oh yeah, and I broke a fingernail at one stage. That was, of course, until I came across The Dismal Oubliette...

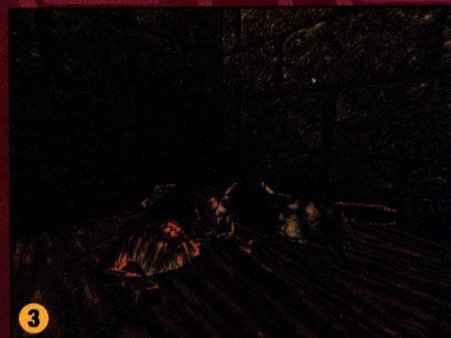
(Maniacal laughter fades into the distance where quietly, almost imperceptibly, you can hear a small boy crying and whimpering softly.)



A placid start for the level with a heart of black. Some non-descript granite walls, stripped pine floors (stylish), and a few odds and sods of health and the like. This level will be a breeze. Fatal mistake number 1 (in a series of 72).



Ah, well if it isn't my regular Saturday night dancing partners, Mr Chainsaw-wielding Troll and Madame Flesh-Eating Demon. How very pleasant. Such are the perils of nightmare skill level (which is the only way to play, incidentally). Pah – these amount to nothing more than an annoying pebble in the shoe of the QuakeMeister, mere grains of sand in the underpants of the Lord.



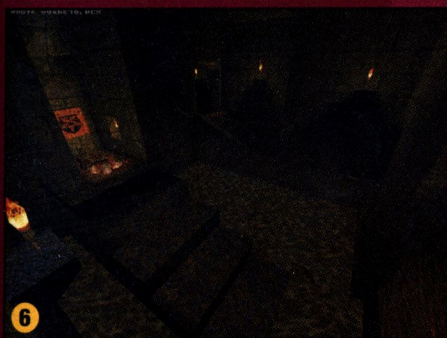
Ah, they've fallen asleep. And curled up together. How cute – yeah pull the other one Shakespeare. This is *Quake*. They're dead. And not just dead. Horribly dead, their entrails turned to puree, their skulls mashed like poppadums, their blood-splattered carcasses fit only to rot, and stink, and poo the place out for all eternity.



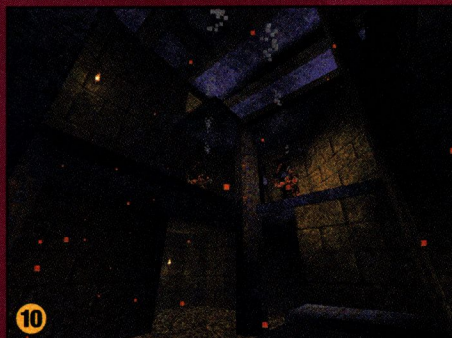
Beyond lies the hub of this level. Four doorways suspended above a dank pit of murky water. The bridge allows access to only one portal at a time. Each portal leads to a deadly challenge. If you manage to survive the perils, you are allowed to pass through the next door. This way your fate is steered. If you come through the perils intact – hah.



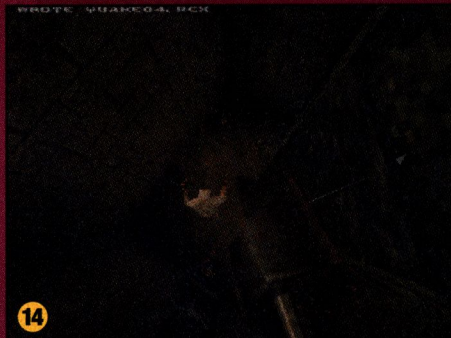
The first conundrum greets me. A switch on high, a bloody annoying ogre, and couple of extra monsters for extra gip. But I think even Gary Bushell might be able to work this one out.



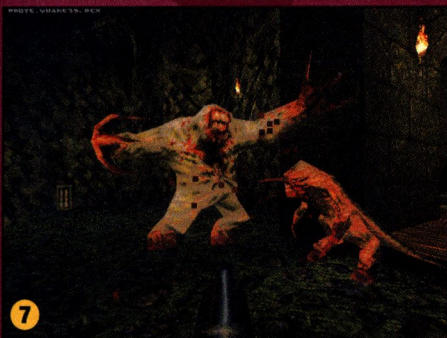
A swift journey round the back and a switch reveals itself. A quick toke on that clockwork wonder and a bridge appears. It's no big deal, but it's a good example of *Quake's* scripting functions, and illustrates how scenery can appear 'out of nothing'. Watch your back!



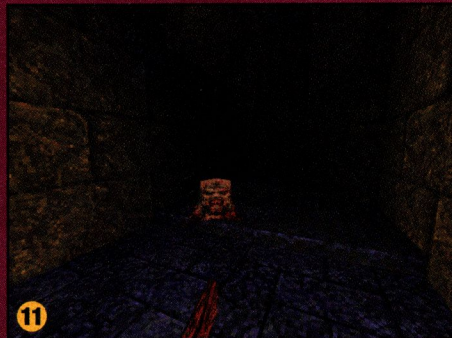
Gosh, that took a couple of reloads – not because I died, mind, but because I wanted to kill them several times over. I've flicked a few switches and now have to ascend this wrought iron staircase, populated by pipe bombing tramps. Sweating? I'm barely flushed.



Yes, it may have taken 19 attempts, but at least I did it. Yes, 19. My confidence as supreme 3D perspective being is slightly shaken. I deem to take it all out on the last shambler from my unique vantage point. Eat grenades mothercrusher!



"Aaaarghh! Shambler! RUN!" But I'm no coward, and calmly dodge its first lightning strike and then casually embroil the big boy in a fight with his demon mate. While they're giving each other a good seeing to (2-1 to the shambler), I'll piss off into the water. Okay?



Luckily I found some quad power tucked away in a hidden underwater vestibule, guarded by a flotilla of zombies. It's maybe time to 'kick some'? Oh, and look what happened to my ogre friends. Lost their heads in all the excitement. Hahahahahahahahahaah!



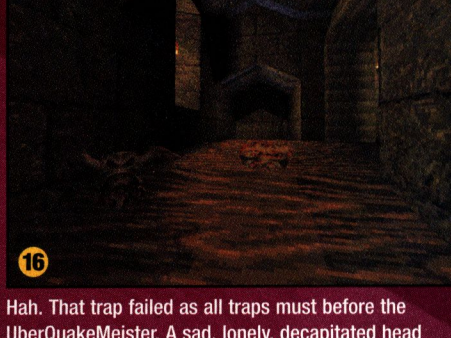
Another portal is accessible. An enticing breastplate of armour beckons me like Uma Thurman's finger. I must resist. I cannot, even though it's bound to be a trap.



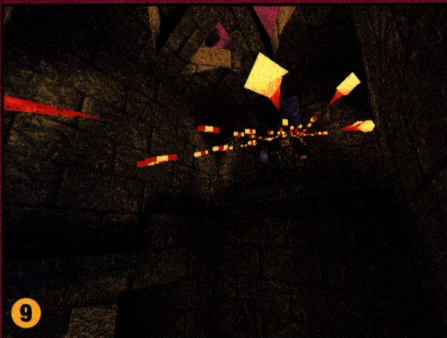
Fatal mistake number 2. The underwater bit seems to be the venue of 'The George Romero Zombie Of The Year Award'. Time for grenade launchers! See ya, ya undead thickos! That shambler's still giving me hassle...



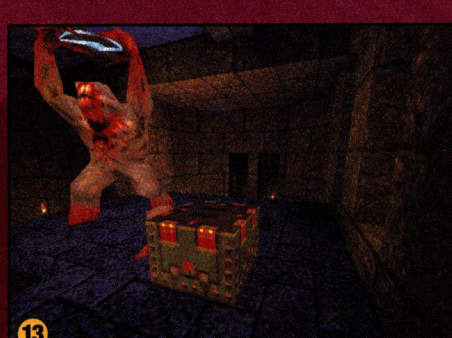
Ah, conundrum number 2. And it's a biggy. Shambler numero uno is still outside where I left him, trying to transfix me with lightning bolts. I've got ogre hassle below, alongside an essential switch. Hmm... If I kill the ogre, right, and then flick the switch, right...



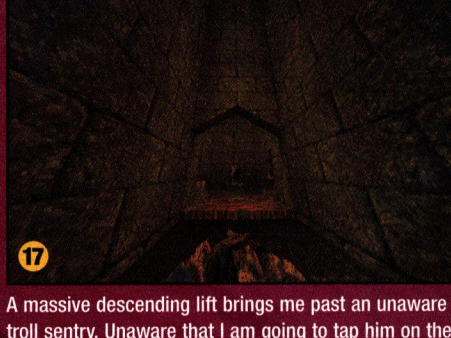
Hah. That trap failed as all traps must before the UberQuakeMeister. A sad, lonely, decapitated head squats on the ground as a joyous trophy to my victory. I feel strangely giddy.



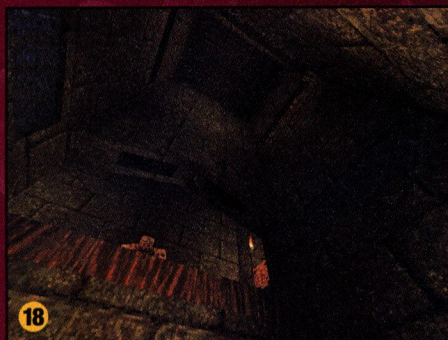
Annoying, well-designed assault course. Thin chasm. Inclinations on each wall form a rapier-thin staircase. Gotta leap across them to reach the top, but it's dominated by two fire-wielding deathknights. Kick butt!



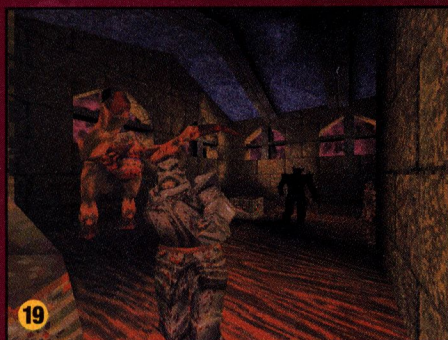
Shambler number two enters stage left. AND HE'S NOT HAPPY. Aarrrrrgghhh! (*Sound of QuakeMeister frying as though he's been electrocuted.*)



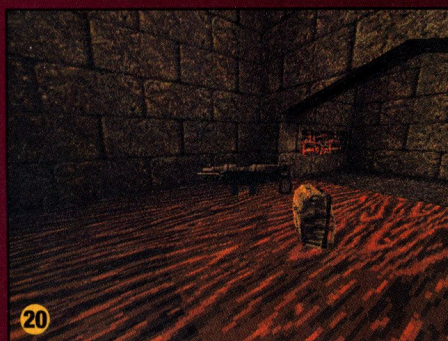
A massive descending lift brings me past an unaware troll sentry. Unaware that I am going to tap him on the shoulder and say boo, or unaware that I am about to pile a rocket into his face? The monsters in *Quake* seem to have peripheral vision, so as long as I keep to one side, he won't see me until it's too late. Hee hee.



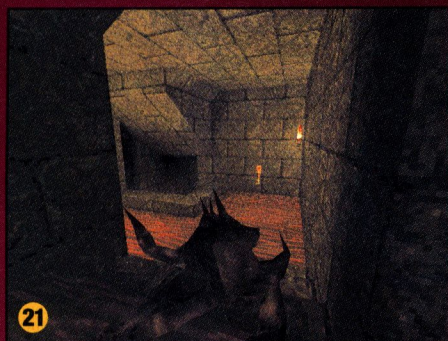
Another *Quake* innovation. This is a true elevator which stops at different floors. No more *Doom*-style leaping off when you spot a doorway. It's all very realistic. Of course, few real-life lifts have an ogre lobbing pipe bombs as an attendant, but there you are. That's *Quake*. Always first to break a few social barriers.



Have Pentagram of Protection, will travel. Let's investigate the third floor and maybe bash some heads. Immunity does strange things to you. I could've killed these monsters, but I let them live (that was a lie).



Hey! I've blagged myself a ThunderBolt. A full-on, first class, prime-cut, ninjascope lighting gun. Result!



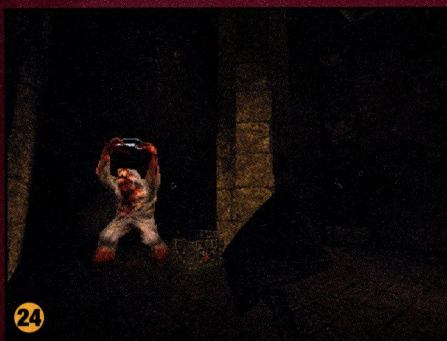
This is what I wanted. A bit of gold key action. I can now open doors, swap it for some lady ogres, or dump it in a Swiss bank account to accrue interest.



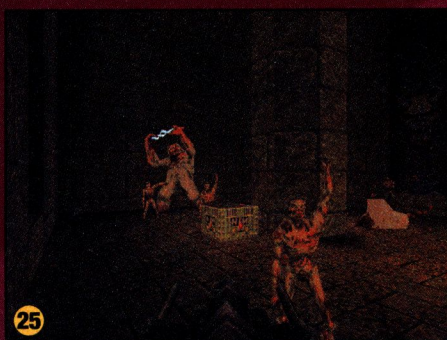
It's Sharon the shambler and Dizzy the demon! Laugh as they fight. Win as the shambler rips out the demon's spine to use as a toothpick. Cheer at the QuakeMeister with his lightning rod: "Eat this, shambler scum!"



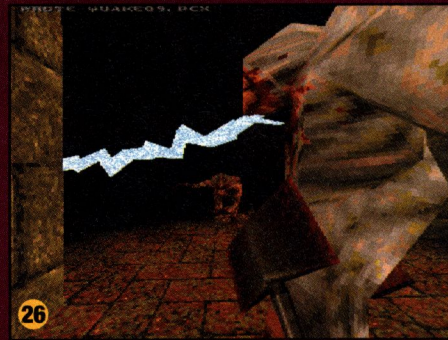
After my stupendous victory, the centre hub has changed again to allow me access to the final portal. Hmm, health and ammo. Possible fight situation on the cards? It all looks fairly innocuous. Déjà vu anyone?



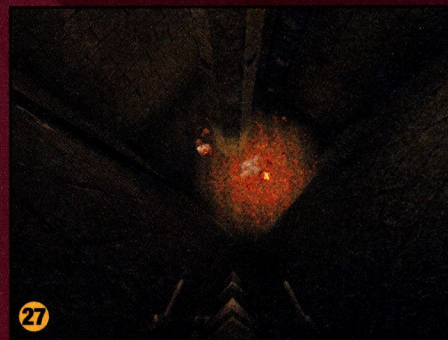
Shit! Why did I go for nightmare level? As the floor drops, two shamblers appear. As I dodge around the central pillar, I wonder if this is not the 'dismal oubliette'.



A third of the way down a demon appears; half-way down, the walls start shooting darts. Two-thirds of the way down, eight zombies teleport in. And that bloody shambler is still alive! Unlike me. Aaarrrhhh...



In an ironic twist of fate, the shambler, once my enemy, has now become my ally as two ugly little spider vores appear and pepper the battle with heat-seeking missiles. One hits the shambler by accident. The shambler is not amused. I, however, am.



The same battle from above. Cool, huh?



My final enemy on this long, torturous trek of a level is a single vore. My shambler, alas, died in combat, protecting me, his friend and – yes – lover from the purple heat-seeking projectiles of death. Now all that is left is for me to avenge his untimely death. Eat grenade, spider thing!

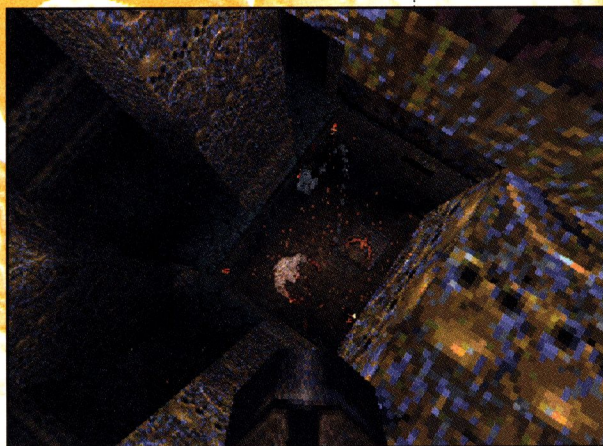


My price is a Black Magic Rune. Four of these I must retrieve from each episode. Only then can I confront Shub-Niggurath and kick his fat, saggy head in. Fin.

feet
thump
eerily.
Explode
a demon
and you'll
hear a sound like Homer
Simpson choking on a pork chop.
Tumble into a piranha-packed
pond and you'll hear their
teeth clattering in
expectation.

And in the
background, the
ambient sound
beavers on. Churning
and clanking of heavy
gears mix with the eerie
calls of distant ravens.
The NIN CD tracks take
the atmosphere and
sharpens it to weeping
point. Disturbing strings melt
into the sound of a small girl,
whimpering and crying in the
distance. Heavily reverbed pipe
bombs clang almost, but not quite,
musically in the dark. A lonely
saxophone plucks a few spinal cords
from your back. Grunts and obscene,
greasy noises churn. Grab the Ring of
Shadows and you'll hear a thousand
dead souls whispering and muttering
in your ears.

Play a network game and the whole
deathmatch level comes alive with
screams, yelps, and gushy splatters as



Gareth's opinion

Slick, you say? *Quake* goes like a Teflon version of a well-greased shovel. Fully customisable, and as well as the multi-player options, there's jump-in-and-outable network and Internet play. Wow! Can these guys ever write a game... er no, but what they *can* write is an engine. So what do I think?

First of all, the single-player mode's 'pony'. There just seems to be this feeling of see monster-stop-kill monster-move forward-see monster etc - all very linear. And where's the fantastic AI we were all waiting for - I mean, they're hardly Mensa material now, are they (although the dogs *are* quite cool)? Remember map 2 where those blocks come out of the floor and into the slots to open the doors? Brilliant, but where's the rest of it? We want *Indiana Jones*-style levels where you can't stop still for a second, full of collapsing floors, crushy/spinny things and booby traps... but there's bugga all! Where's all these well-designed levels we hear about? Oh, you mean architecturally well-designed? Ahh...

And the multi-player's not that much better. It's just *Doom* with an extra gun - the grenade launcher. The lightning gun may as well be the plasma gun, and the pistol's been done away with. Hardly ground-breaking stuff. All things considered, if it's a decent engine you want you'd be better off with one of the cheaper CAD packages - then you can design your own levels.

lungs and entrails splosh noisily into water. Six or seven different fire-fights can be going on simultaneously. As you home in, shotgun blasts, bouncing grenades, and roaring rockets get louder. Anticipation mounts. You lick your lips as the door groans open. The air fries as you unleash your lightning gun into the crowd. The quad power kicks in, shrieking like a fog horn. Your enemies scatter, trying to escape. You transfix one with a bolt of lightning, and then scythe another as you whip round. You open up with the double barrel shotgun, gibbing your way through the melee. Intestines and torsos slap against the cobblestone walls. A couple of players have sought refuge in a pit below. You lob a few quad-powered grenades into the hole. You hear the hollow clunks and then the gratifying concussion as the bombs go off into a confined space. A waterfall of gibbs streaks into the air. As the quad power winds down, you still have time to quickly mince the poor player who's just reincarnated with a yelp next to you.

Having your Quake...

Single-player *Quake* is no revelation. But the fact that it has supreme graphics, atmosphere, architecture and gameplay seems to have passed many people by. The hype hasn't helped, but it's still unbelievable just how many people are underwhelmed with *Quake*.

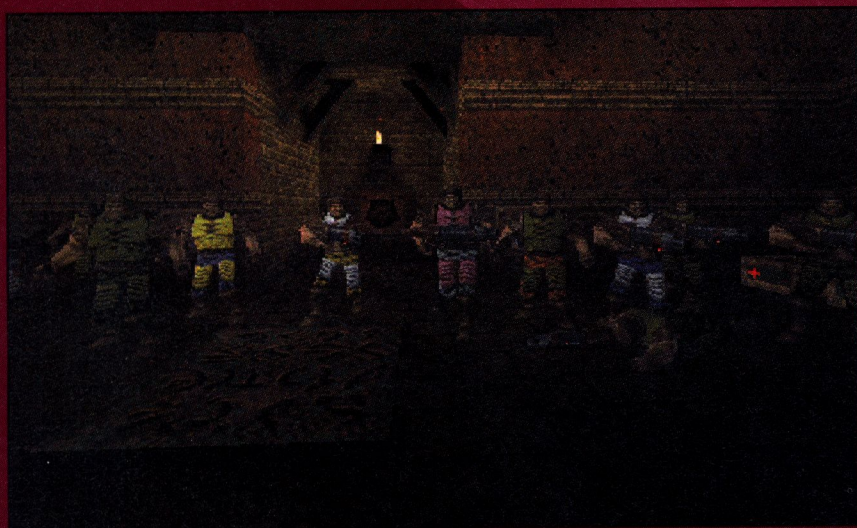


Death School

Nothing can prepare you for *Quake* deathmatch. Well... if you dressed head to foot in a garish tracksuit, stuck skateboard pads all over your body, bought an axe, shotgun, and a rocket launcher, grabbed 16 of your most sociopathic mates, and then ran round Windsor Castle killing each other and drowning in the moat – that might prepare you.

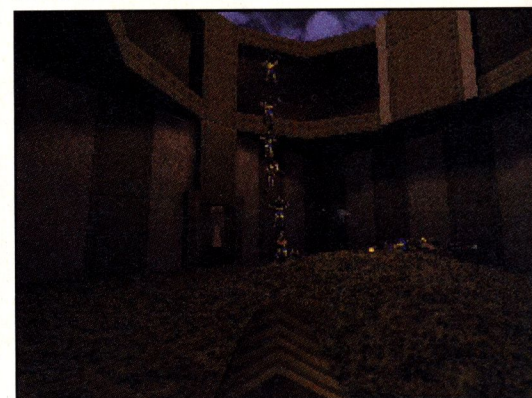
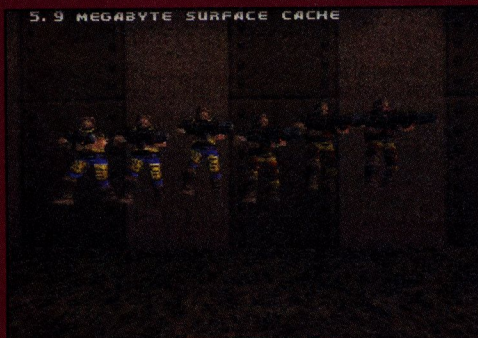
Quake deathmatch has to be played to be believed. You may have tasted four-player *Doom*. You might have modded your chum for a quick bit of head-to-head *Nukem*. You may even have thrown 17 metres of co-ax around your house so you and your girlfriend could race *Screamer*, or strategise *Command & Conquer*, or fly *EF2000*. You love-birds, you. These experiences – fun though they may be – are as nought compared to the somebody-is-standing-on-the-hose type distension in your pleasure pipe – the experience that is *Quake* deathmatch.

Allow us to give a free trial of *Quake School*, where you can learn all the tricks'n'tactics necessary to win at *QuakeMatch*. Study hard and you will be.



PHOTOGRAPHS

If you get momentarily bored playing DM, why not gather the boys for a quick team photo, huh? Get Knuckles, Ninja, BoyWonder, ChewyRocket, Salmonella, DeathLord, Tampax and Onion in one room. Change your field of view to about 120 degrees (like a good 24mm lens). Arrange the boys with not a little symmetry and then take a snap (for extra amusement value, pick up the quad power and rocket launcher before taking the piccy).



QUAKESTICK

For an extra no-killing thrill, why not try and emulate the Flying Caramazov Brothers or one of those hideous Polish clog-wearing acts which appear on Paul Daniels shows when Debbie McGee has to fart off stage to change her frock. With some skill and co-ordination, you too can jump on each other's heads and form a vast human QuakeStick™.

LURKING

A much-hated but very effective tactic is 'lurking' (or 'camping' or 'sniping' as others put it). Simply put, you stay still, in a dark bit or on a ledge, with a rocket launcher or similar mighty weapon and wait. Wait for people to pass. When they do, you shoot them. It's talentless and boring but it gets frags. And if it gets frags, then it's a good tactic.





LIGHTNING HURTS

Use the lightning gun. Use the lightning gun. Some *Quake* battles can get too rocket-centric. The ThunderBolt in the registered version balances everything out. It has a limited range but it scares people. Scares them solid. You can pin a rocket-wielding spineless shit effortlessly and burn the very life blood from his brain. As you depart victorious through a cloud of sizzling bacon, you be glad you visited Quake School.



PREY ON THE WEAK

One of the great tactics in multi-player *Quake* is utter ruthlessness. Using the 3D sound, you should home in on existing battles, dogfights and bundles. Typically, the players involved will be low on health (and crying). Put an end to their misery by unleashing your rocket launcher. Or better still lob a few pineapples into the battle arena and avoid getting your hands dirty.



HOSTAGES

Another cunning little strategy is using other players as bodily shields. The technique is simple. Enter a room in which a firefight is occurring. One player will inevitably be standing still. If they've got red armour, even better. Simply place yourself behind them like the big nancy sailor boy that you are, and shoot them and their target repeatedly. Any shots fired at you will be absorbed by your non-consenting partner. And he – caught in the passion of battle – will not notice your indulgence.



GRAB THE SCORES

Quake matches can be so transient, so fleeting. They pass you by like the 'average' BT bills you notch up playing them. Often, people will come away claiming they won the level when it's blatantly obvious that the victor was in fact YOU. You could go round their house and smash their kneecaps to gristle with a fire extinguisher, but they may live in America and may have a gun. Better still, just swack that

F12 key when the final scores appear. Instant irrefutable evidence of your excellency.

RANKINGS	
46	ROCKET_MAN
47	CUCHLAIN
51	NASTY_RABBIT
55	GIBBER
74	VOODOO_MELON
77	DMOORES
89	MOTHER_THERESA
12	BISSED
11	FRAGMEAT
10	DARK_RAVEN
9	LEECH
0	JANSWER
0	PLAYER
MONSTERS: 0 / 0	
SECRETS: 5 / 5	
TIME: 29:52	
GLOOM KEEP	



When *Doom* came out it impressed everybody. But that was because we were different people then. On one side, we had girlfriends, a social life, chums, and a clean-living home counties infrastructure around us. *Doom* soon took that away. On the other side, we had a lower threshold for amazement. Until that point, PC arcade action games had been crap. Nothing could have stunned us more than *Doom*'s fluid 3D engine, its animated gore, its fulsome weaponry and its big juicy gameplay. Today everyone and their spider plant is doing 3D *Doom* clones, with polygoned this and texture-mapped that. You can miss innovation and genius, even if it's smack bang right in front of your face.

Remember when you saw *Star Wars* for the first time and you thought: "Carrie Fisher can come and wash me with a sponge any day" and then you thought: "Jeez - that film was jolly realistic, I can't imagine anything being more convincing." Then, you saw *Terminator II*, and you thought: "Christ." And then you saw *Babylon 5* on telly and thought: "Jeezus." And then you saw *Jurassic Park* and you quite frankly thought: "Bloody hell." Each time, your sense of wonder was dulled. Now, it's hard to imagine a special effect which will blow your mind the way each of those films did. You've become immune. And with effects becoming more and more realistic, each one is greeted with slightly less blasphemous swear words than before.



Duke v

Never since Big Daddy v Giant Haystacks has a conflict raged so tediously than the current "*Duke 3D* is better than *Quake* - oh yes it is, oh no it's not" currently being fought on all fronts. Naturally, this war has excluded the potential merits of both games and concentrated instead on the primitive tribalism which makes this planet such a lovely place to live. *Duke*-ites say *Quake* (or 'Quap' as it's known) is rubbish, compared to all the special things *Duke* has to offer. *Quake*heads have coined the catchphrase "*Quake pour hommes, Duke pour femmes*" as a witty summing-up of their opinion. Both camps are as bad as the other. But the *Nuke*-ites are the worst. (Er? - Ed.) Their arguments are thin.

1. *Duke* has a sense of humour. It's really funny. It's got character and visual gags.

Hmmm, yeah *Duke* is hilarious. I love shooting prostitutes and having them explode - yummy yummy. But you know what I like best? Doing impressions of *Duke*'s gravelly voice. "Those aliens are going to pay...", "Hmmm, terminated." "I'm all outta bubblegum." I tell you, I have my mates rolling in the aisles, their ribs snapping like dry twigs as they double-up in hysterics. I've done it a hundred times

already and they're still laughing. They're really good to quote at parties as well. You know, I still laugh when I hear them in the game.

2. *Quake* takes itself far too seriously.

Yeah, exactly. Don't those Quakers know that great games have to be funny. Check out *Leisure Suit Larry* and *Simon The Sorcerer* - totally rad games - and hilarious too! And that famous 'space comedy' *Wing Commander IV*. That Mark Hammill kills me. *Quake*'s way too serious. I mean when you talk to people - oh you don't do that. You just shoot them. Well, you can't say "Shake it, baby" to the girls. Anyway, they should have had more tits and billboards in it.

3. *Quake*'s plot makes no sense.

Right. Well, I like to have a good strong plot when I'm playing a blast 'em up. Motivation, you know? I mean, all that guff about sligates and magic kingdoms and stuff. That's just stupid and unrealistic. You need a plot more like *Nuken*'s. Aliens have invaded Earth and stolen all our girls. Now that's believable.

4. *Quake*'s way too dark. It's really gloomy and depressing.

The games I hate most are those with atmosphere, you know? I don't want to be absorbed or engrossed by a game. I certainly don't want to be depressed or wander around scary dark bits. Basically, I wanna be cheered up. Bright colours, lots of girls with big tits, nicely coloured levels where I can see all the monsters. *Quake*'s too, oh, you know what I mean - realistic. All the monsters come rearing unexpectedly out of the dark. I don't know about you, but it scares the bloody shit out of me.

Quake

5. In *Duke* you can manipulate switches. In *Quake*, you can only bump into them.

This is an important point. In *Duke* you can hit switches and all sorts of weird things happen. But you can properly manipulate them, on and off. Now that 'off' bit is really important. If you don't want to open a door and finish the level, you don't have to. In *Quake*, you bump into a switch which opens a door or pulls out a drawbridge, you're obliged to use it. In *Duke*, you can just close that door or put the bridge away. That's interactive. Okay, you might not get the extra health, or the keycard, or be able to finish the level – but it's your choice right?

6. *Quake* is so slow on my DX2/66. *Duke* runs fine.

This is a big point. Why does *Quake* run so jerkily on my computer when *Duke* runs alright? Okay, so *Quake*'s got a posh 3D engine, real-time texture-mapping and realistic graphics, but come on. My DX2/66 was totally cutting-edge technology two years ago. Why should I have to upgrade for one game? Okay, I can't actually run Windows 95 on my machine, nor any program released in the last year, but it's fine for what I wanna do, which is downloading pictures of naked blokes from the Internet, and playing old games.

7. The weapons in *Duke* are totally rad. They crap on *Quake*'s.

Yeah, I know what you're gonna say. *Duke*'s got a pistol, shotgun, machine gun and a rocket launcher. Just like *Doom* and *Quake*. But it's got other, better weapons too. The pipe bomb which is a bit like *Quake*'s grenade, only better. Then, you've got the freeze gun, which was nicked out of *Hexen*, but it's still cool. And then it's got the shrinkray, which is hilarious. And the tripmines. Okay, I only actually use the machine gun and rocket launcher in deathmatch. Yeah, so you can plug new weapons into *Quake*, but so what? By the time they come out, *Duke* will still be king.

6. Yeah, *Quake*'s just a *Doom* clone. It adds nothing new.

Duke is totally excellent. You can do all the stuff you could in *Doom*, and then some. There's underwater bits, and explosions, and you can go underneath things, and crawl into tunnels, and there's a bunch of new weapons. *Quake* can't compare. Yeah okay, so it's got a next generation engine, and realistic swimming bits, and some new weapons, and a totally polygon environment, exploding monsters, 16-player deathmatch with entering and exiting, dynamic lighting, true looking up and down, jumping, and scripting, and a really good soundtrack – but apart from all that, it adds nothing new. It's too much like *Doom*. *Duke* is too, but *Duke*'s er, different.

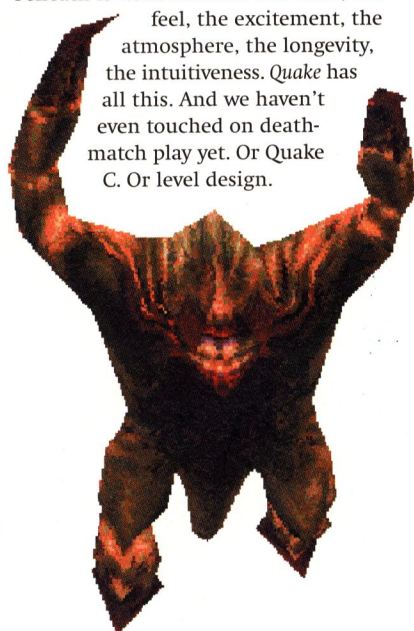


It's the same with games. By today's standards, *Doom* has Sesame Street graphics, but if *Quake* had come out two years ago, civilisation would have ended. Those who complain that *Quake* is 'too dark', or '*Doom III*', or 'lacking in humour', or 'not as good as *Duke Nukem 3D*' are missing the point. "Owww mummy," they bleat. "*Quake* doesn't run on my DX2/66 – it's pants." Christ, when *Doom* first appeared, we were running it on steam-powered SX/25s and barely getting 15 frames per second out of it. Now my entry-level Pentium bounces it around my monitor at 45fps. *Quake* is looking towards the future. It's the next generation. It's advancement beyond advancement. You're just too – how can I put this politely – brain-dead? Blinkered? Cynical? Idiotic? Retarded? Immune. Yeah, that's it. You're just too immune to notice.

Get with it.

But we're talking aesthetics here. Everyone but everyone surely knows that graphics and 3D engines are but icing on the cake, dressing on the wound, a tautly stretched condom over the genitals of gameplay – what's beneath is what matters. The taste, the

feel, the excitement, the atmosphere, the longevity, the intuitiveness. *Quake* has all this. And we haven't even touched on death-match play yet. Or *Quake* C. Or level design.





Postcards From The Edge*

Fall through a slipgate into an all-spinning, all-rupturing carnival of death blood? You'd be kicking yourself if you forgot your camera, correct? Just as well I remembered mine then, eh? Eh? What? Come on then! COME ON!

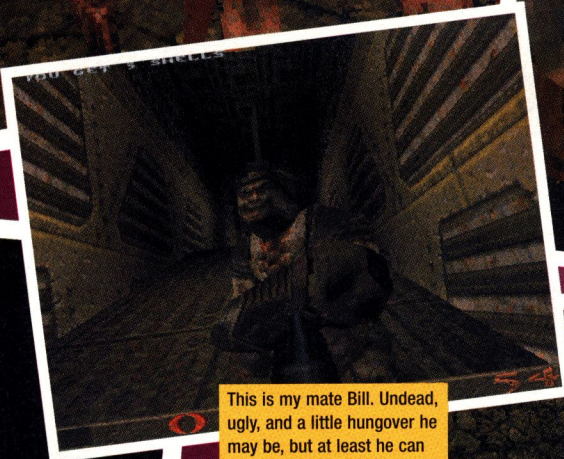
Come on then! COME ON THEN!
I'll take you all on! Oh – you want some? And you? And you at the back? I'll take you all.



This is me getting a little gip from one of *Quake's* 'cops'.



This is my mate Bill. Undead, ugly, and a little hungover he may be, but at least he can still appreciate the old 'shotgun in the gonads' gag.



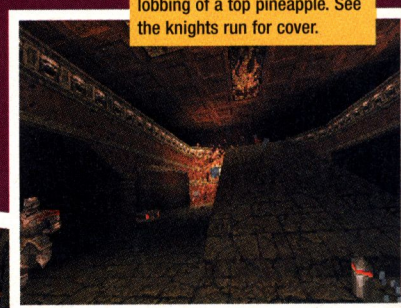
Experience the local ruins.



Key. Quad damage. Homing missile. Vore. What a combo.



This juicy moment depicts my lobbing of a top pineapple. See the knights run for cover.



Couple of lads got a bit pissed and fell off the balcony, onto my head. How we laughed.



Death. Murder. Maim. Hack.
Slay. Slash. Obliterate. Bundle.

Another great looking local
ruin. This one was a bit secret.

The local Satanic church and
its rather gelatinous priest.

Come on then, 'ave a go if
you think you're hard enough!

The Shambler Disco was
strangely deserted.

Here are the boys, ready
for a rumble a bit of
chainsaw tag. Bundle!

As they say in Spanish,
arquitecturola mundo bien.

* From the edge
of an eerily dark
abyss, you'll
understand, from
whence the sound
of a hundred demons
filleting a hundred
zombies comes, while
in the background, in
the blackness, a
shambler purrs.
With pleasure.
With anticipation.

The moany old couple from
next door come round to
whinge about the noise.

The swimming pool needed a bit
of a clean. A few too many flesh-
eating jobbies for my liking.



Chris's opinion

Not only is *Quake* one of the most atmospheric games I've ever played, it also has the most impressive 3D engine ever to grace a PC. Add to this the fact that the graphics are gorgeous and spoogethworthy (after all, it's been developed by the people who brought us *Doom*), and we're looking at something very impressive indeed.

The only slight problem I have with *Quake* is this: does the fact that the game is undoubtedly very impressive in many departments make up for the fact that, underneath the gloss, the actual gameplay is not as addictive or varied as that in *Duke 3D*, the game it will inevitably be compared with? For me, the answer is no. I prefer *Duke's* ever-changing scenery to the *Quake* levels, which to me all look very similar. I prefer the element of surprise in *Duke* to *Quake's* comparatively repetitive gameplay. I also prefer *Duke's* sense of humour to *Quake's* 'holier than thou' attitude which takes itself far too seriously. Don't get me wrong – I really like *Quake*, and I'll play it to the end, but I think I'll wait until I've finished *Duke 3D* first, which to me is simply more fun to play.

Conclusion

Yeah, yeah, you argue, but you've been head and shoulders up *Quake's* colon for the last year. Maybe. But there are things I hate about it. You can't duck, for example. iD's official line on this is that it "stops lurking". That just doesn't wash. The game caters perfectly for snipers. Those thick expanses of shadows to find in most locations and at most junctions on the levels are perfect hidey-holes for non-talented players. And you will find, in most multi-player games, people lurking in shadow or near start points, or on roof tops, their rocket launchers humming gently in their cowardly yellow hands. Not being able to duck is frustrating. In an environment as realistic as this, you want to be able to crouch behind boxes and scenery, popping up to exchange fire, hitting the floor to avoid rockets. I hate some

of the monsters. The scrag and its manky green phlegm trails is shite. The knight is badly animated. The zombies are great, but the rottweilers suck. The lava demon boss at the end of the first episode is stunning – but where are the others? Each episode ends with a whimper. The final confrontation is a dire

disappointment. The deathmatch game has also been hard to

appreciate. Armour and health reappears too frequently. The quad power materialises every minute, giving even Helen Keller a chance of scoring a few frags just by waiting for it. The mighty shotgun – so long the weapon of choice for professional deathmatchers – is relegated to bottom

place in the weapon's league. The rocket launcher and ThunderBolt are just too all-seeing and all-killing to fight against.

But *Quake* is not a two-player deathmatch game. The respawning items and rocket make it too easy for a good player to utterly dominate a lesser



Jeremy's opinion

Quake is quite simply one of the best games ever. Forget *Duke*, it's not even in the same league. It's like watching your favourite film in the Odeon at Leicester Square, and then watching it again on a black and white portable telly – or like watching Gillingham play AC Milan. There really is no comparison. *Duke's* a good game, sure, but *Quake's* better in every respect. It looks better, it plays better, it sounds better. It's just awesome. Things have moved on and the benchmark has been redefined. Polygons and true 3D are here to stay. The goalposts have moved – forever. There really is no looking back. *Quake* – Pour Homme. *Duke* – Pour Femme. Et une femme qui ne comprend pas, c'est parce qu'elle est stupide (or something).



QUAKE C

There's a big deal with *Quake* we haven't yet touched on. When *Doom* came out, hundreds of hackers from hundreds of countries around the world attacked its code, disassembling it, tearing it limb from hexadecimal limb. Within months of its release there were 'upgrades', add-ons speeding up the weapons, changing the monsters, redesigning the levels, and adding hard-core porn to the walls (ahem). A lot of these were hamfistedly constructed, patched together with elastoplast – but they worked, and they excited people, and they prolonged the life of *Doom* beyond all expectations.

This time round id have made their game completely accessible with full 'plug-in architecture' and its own programming language – Quake C. Anybody with a bit of suss, a bit of time, and no girlfriend can now, with a bit of tinkering, change any – that's ANY – aspect of *Quake* gameplay, graphics, and design. "Yeah, yeah," we hear you harrumph. "Like that's gonna be easy." Well, we reply slightly aggressively, within days of *Quake's* US release a month ago, new Quake C patches appeared on the Internet, radically changing and, in some cases, improving *Quake's* already very large thing-sized gameplay. Here, we list just a few of the many patches which have already appeared.

EXTRA GIBS

Takes *Quake's* already abattoir-esque gory flesh explosions ('gibs') and amplifies them ten-fold. Lightly clip a grunt with an axe and he'll explode into a shower of body parts. Shoot a zombie and it's like somebody has scribbled across the screen in red felt tip. Pure, unabashed crimson joy.

GIB GUN

One in a long line of 'amusing' add-ons, the gib gun fires – yes – bloody body parts (randomly chosen from a cast featuring amputated leg, decapitated head, disembodied torso, and shaving-accident arm). Sloppy noises included.

FLASH BOMB

Lob this grenade replacement into a room and a countdown screams out. "Five... four... three... two...". Bang. The bomb detonates in a flash. Everyone in the room dies. Hilarious traffic jams in deathmatch ensue as everyone bundles for the exit.

SOLID MONSTERS

This subtle yet effective patch makes the monsters more 'solid', so you can climb on them, pile their corpses into large rotting heaps, and – yes! – shoot them after death. If a shambler has caused you special grief you can vent your frustration by pummeling rounds and rounds of cannon into its elephantine carcass. Shoot it enough and it'll shrug gorily into its component body parts.

HOMING MISSILE

This one is a doosie. Fire a rocket and it'll home in on the nearest available monsters or player. A "TARGET..." message will appear informing the firer who's been chosen, while the unfortunate subject will also receive a similar warning. They'd better run. This missile can navigate the tightness of corners and only a skill deathmatch (ie moi) will be able to escape.

PERSUADOTRON

Converts the axe into a magical turn-coat device, lassoing any monsters to your side. 'Turned' beasts will protect you, fight for you, and seek out and destroy monsters. Skillful results can have you wandering through a level with a shambler army at your heels.

RANDOM RESPAWN

Ever wanted to fight as a monster in deathmatch? Now's your chance. Engage this patch and every time you respawn in deathmatch, you'll come back as a random monster with all the characteristics and power that beastie has to offer. S-M-A-R-T spells SMART.

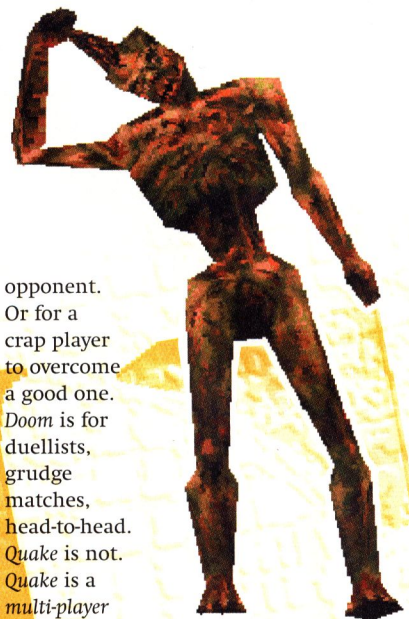
ADVANCED TEAMPLAY

Using the standard teamplay console command you can now engage other modes. One makes your team mates vulnerable to 'friendly fire' (you'll lose a frag if you kill them), while the other gibs you instantly if you shoot your bum-chum. As they say at Ambassadorial parties: "Excellente."

ADVANCED RESPAWN

To make deathmatch a little fairer for lesser players, advanced respawn makes weapons and power-ups appear randomly throughout the level. This immediately stops Monsieur UnTalented from collecting the rocket launcher *every single time*, and puts a stop to Captain Coward's eternal waiting for the QuadDamage.

These are just a first thumb and fingerful of the hundreds of thousands of *Quake* patches waiting in the wings. Budding games programmers and youthful hobbyists are churning them out on a daily basis. Obviously some are pants, but the majority are brilliant. And we've yet to see the tidal wave of new monsters, new levels, new sounds, new graphics, and new bits due over the next year. But it's coming...



opponent. Or for a crap player to overcome a good one. *Doom* is for duellists, grudge matches, head-to-head. *Quake* is not. *Quake* is a multi-player game. Just

when you hit *Doom's* four-player ceiling, *Quake* kicks in. Five-player is gory, seven-player is frantic. Ten-player becomes a massacre. Twelve-player is insane. Sixteen-player is beyond anything you'll ever play in the whole wide world. *Quake* is about wading in. *Quake* is about kicking arse, and kicking arse, over and over again until somebody blows your leg off. *Quake* is about dousing the level in pineapples. About farting about in low gravity, pummeling orbiting players with rockets. It's about fighting your way to the quad power, getting it, and then being immediately shot. It's about drowning in radioactive gunk while your enemy team members rain grenades on your head. It's about dialing into your local *Quake* server and appearing in the middle of a ten-player fire fight. And getting your head caved in. It's about installing the latest Quake C patch and fighting a bunch of new monsters with a bunch of new weapons. It's about all the things it is and all the things it can be. As we're so fond of saying, *Quake* pour homme, *Duke* pour femme. **Z**

Score

96

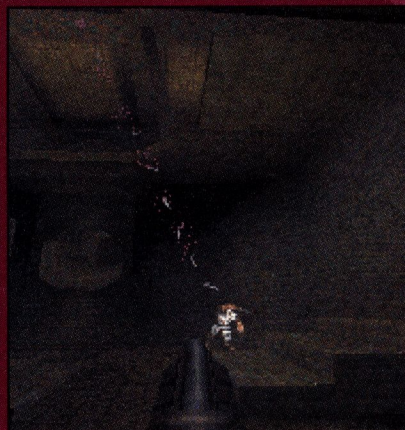
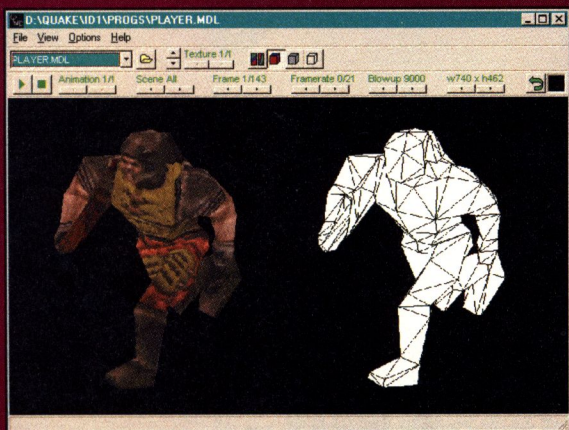
Fucking brilliant.

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Charlie Brooker indulges in a bout of misty-eyed nostalgia as he recalls the games that held him spellbound in the days when graphic loveliness and neighbour-unfriendly sound effects were but a glint in developers' eyes. Since then, games have moved on almost beyond recognition... or have they? Well, one thing hasn't changed – Charlie had no social life then, and has even less of one now.

Cannon Fodder with A-levels. 'Command' an army of your very own, and then use all your skill, judgement and heavy artillery to 'Conquer' the opposing forces. Makes a mockery of war, and entertains the pants off you while it does so. Everybody in the whole wide world loves it to death.

An aerial view of a Star Wars planet, likely Tatooine, featuring a winding river, a large red vehicle, a dome-shaped structure, and a building.

But have the basic elements which make games *fun* ever really changed? Beneath the gloss, is there really that much difference between the blocky old *Jetpac*s of yesteryear, and the super-dazzling *Quakes* of today? Is the new breed nothing more than a visually impressive amalgamation of those old-school epics? Pour yourself a stiff drink, sit down and strap yourself in as we



(Above) *Pac Man* – the yellow ball-bodied bullimic who captivated the world.

NOW: Dull unoriginal storylines involving hateful yanks in baseball caps, alien invaders or mystic swords, as dictated by marketing scumbags with nary an original or daring idea in their pointless empty heads.

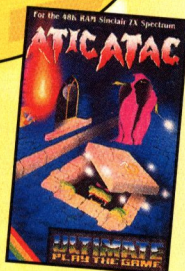
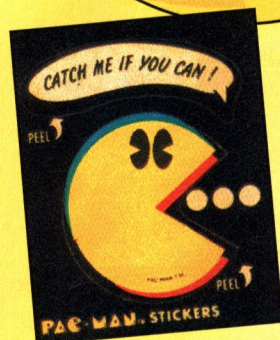
Ah... such joy. A superb isometric-view arcade adventure game, packed to bursting point with crisp SVGA visuals, miniature polygon characters, decent puzzles and a skload of typically French almost-arty weirdness. As charming as it's large, and heartily recommended to anyone who ever took a fancy to games like...



THEN & NOW

THEN: Loading games from a cassette, only to have them crash ten minutes into the tape. Cue much rewinding, fiddling about with 'tone' and 'volume' settings, and copious use of swear words.

NOW: Installing a game from a CD, only to have it crash when you try to run the bastard. Cue five days of clearing hard drive space, configuring sound cards, buying additional SIMMs, and waving your fist at a picture of Bill Gates.



(Above) Another classic Ultimate title.

(Left) It's Pacmania!



Let's go retro!

Here, just for the record, is a list of just some of the old-school titles we'd like to see being dragged kicking and screaming into the '90s. With care and attention, every single one of them could be an absolute belter...

SPY vs SPY (CBM 64)

It's been mentioned before, but my God! It's worth mentioning again. Can someone – anyone – make a decent update of this classic game now?

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE: Picture a remake with SVGA isometric visuals – and a modern link-up – and *spooge*.

Saboteur (CBM 64/Spectrum)

Top-notch kung-fu action collides with secret agent-style skulduggery in this bizarre platform-cum-fighting game.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE: Why not remake it in a first-person perspective *Quake* style?

Skool Daze (ZX Spectrum)

Utterly wonderful 'naughty boy' simulator, which set up a believable(ish) school environment... and then let you run amok through it. You could even write obscenities on the blackboard and give the school swot a dead arm when the teacher wasn't looking.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE: A new version utilising the *Alone In The Dark* engine.

Trashman (ZX Spectrum)

A personal favourite. Truly bizarre gaming action in which the monotonous daily grind of a council dustman becomes a gripping man-against-nature fight for survival. Sort of.

WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE: A \$400million dollar remake, starring Peter Falk and the late John Lennon. Set on Mars. And with lots of car chases and throwaway pornography in it.



NOW: Quake

You've probably heard of this one. Apparently it's quite good. Storm your way through level after level of three-dimensional horror, blasting the bejesus out of anything that moves while frantically exploring the spooky architecture. Collect power-ups! Get chased by scary monsters! Link up with your mates and run around trying to shoot each other's stomachs out! It's tops – but *isn't it* just a little bit like some of the following...?

THEN: 3D Monster Maze (ZX81)

Brought to you in glorious teletext-o-vision on the ZX81 (a home computer so slender you really could use it as a door wedge), *3D Monster Maze* was the stuff of nightmares. There you were, stuck in a three-dimensional maze, desperately trying to escape the clutches of a genuinely terrifying Tyrannosaurus Rex. It didn't have any sound effects, it moved at about one frame per minute, and getting it up and running involved a gruelling ten-minute cassette-loading session. But by God, it was brilliant.

WHAT IT'S GOT IN COMMON WITH QUAKE:

Claustrophobia. Brooding menace. A 3D maze and a big scary monster. And plenty of underwear-desecrating moments of terror. Need I say more?

THEN: Space Invaders

(Taito, Arcade)

The one that really caught the public's imagination. Think of it as an early, low-budget adaptation of *Independence Day*. Endless waves of alien invaders are terrorising the people of Earth by... um... er... floating in the air and moving from side to side a bit. Very very slowly. You (yes, YOU) are our only hope. Armed with only a single-shot tank-like thing, the fate of mankind rests in your hands. Originally presented in glorious monochrome, an improved 'colour' version soon followed – with tinted, transparent strips cunningly stuck onto the screen to provide the additional hues.

WHAT IT'S GOT IN COMMON WITH QUAKE:

At first glance, absolutely sod all. But wait just a moment. What exactly does the gameplay consist of? Why, shooting things, of course. Not just shooting, but a bit of 'duck and cover' too – the woefully inadequate 'defence shields' take care of that. So there you have it. Plenty of side to side movement, sniping, bullet-dodging and hiding. Just like *Quake*, in fact.

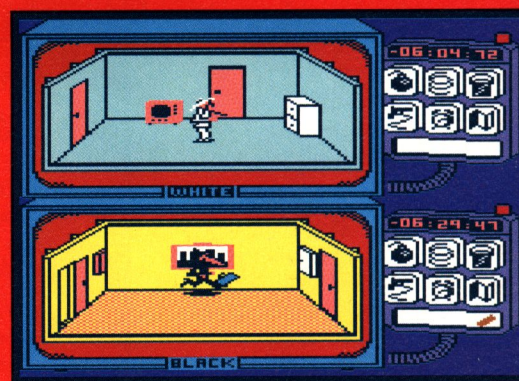
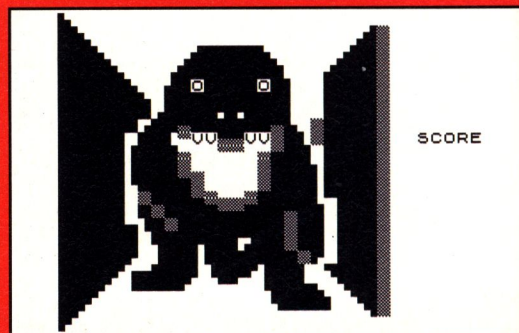
THEN: Spy vs Spy

(US Gold, CBM 64/ZX Spectrum)

A devious duel to the death for two players. Based on the wordless comic strip from *MAD Magazine*, the action sees you and a mate doing battle within an unnamed foreign embassy. Emerging victorious depended upon your ability to outwit your opponent through the use of violent boobey traps, combined with good navigational skills and a proficiency at hand-to-hand combat. Sort of like 'Chess meets Roadrunner', if you like.

WHAT IT'S GOT IN COMMON WITH QUAKE:

Spy vs Spy is the original Deathmatch, in which the good die young, and the sneaky survive. Not only does it see both of you simultaneously let loose within a complex environment, it also encourages underhand unfair tactics – such as lying in wait, ready to spring up and ambush your hapless opponent when he least expects it. What's more, the vicious comedic satisfaction experienced while watching your enemy die – especially when they're shot or electrocuted – is strikingly similar to the glow that envelops you whenever a *Quake* opponent explodes in a shower of giblets. If there's any old-school game that's just *begging* for a '90s update, it's this one.



NOW: EF2000, Su27 Flanker, Hind, ATF, etc...

No self respecting '90s PC flight sim can consider itself well-dressed without at least three of the following items draped lovingly across its body:

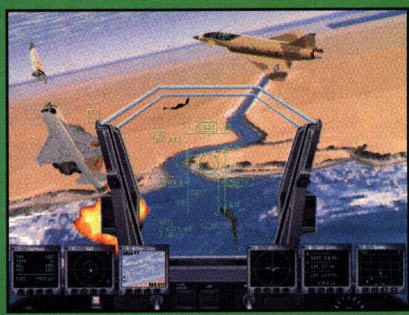
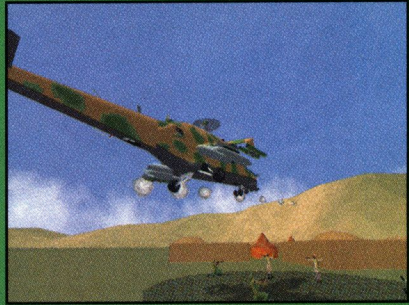
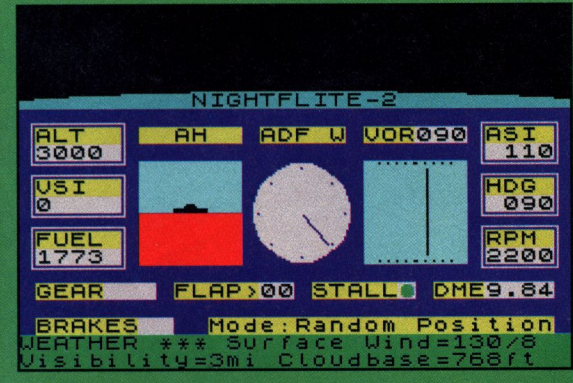
1. A name that sounds a bit like a techno band (as in "Have you heard that slammin' remix of *Windmills Of Your Mind* by EF2000 yet?").
2. More polygons than you'll find in all 18 volumes of *The Complete Encyclopaedia Of Geometric Shapes*.
3. Terrain so realistic and complex in appearance, you feel like you're on a sightseeing tour.
4. A flight engine so realistic and complex that you can't actually fly the bastard thing.

Okay, okay... so you need to upgrade your machine five times over just to get past the installation routine. Okay, okay, so the hi-res modes run at a frame rate that would shame *Henry's Cat*. Whatever beefs you may have about the flight sims of today, it's worth remembering that once upon a time, we were limited to shit like...

THEN: Nightflight (ZX Spectrum)

The sheer audacity of it. A flight simulator that, conveniently for the programmer, only allows you to fly the plane after sundown. Which meant that you couldn't see anything - except the inky blackness of the night, of course. Hour upon hour of simple blank-screen action - and to think, nowadays we complain if our computerised aircraft doesn't cast a realistic shadow. In those days you couldn't even see *the ground*, for God's sake. The one concession to any vague representation of actual *scenery* was the line of landing lights either side of the runway. Pity the Spectrum-owning propeller head. Pity him.

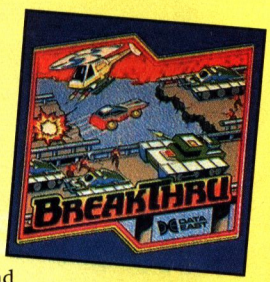
WHAT IT'S GOT IN COMMON WITH EF2000 ET AL: You get to fly a plane and discover just how easy it is to crash into the ground, first-hand.



Consider the changes that have taken place. Early games were usually produced by sole individuals, shut away in their bedrooms until at least four in the morning, living exclusively on Pepsi and pizza. Today, thanks to increased complexity, it's a team effort. This ensures that many important gameplay elements are decided more or less by committee - making the inclusion of idiosyncratic touches (which often lead to brilliance) far less likely. Furthermore, the monumental costs serve to scare the publisher into demanding absolutely nothing less than a sure-fire hit - and if that means mindlessly aping the last big success, then so be it.

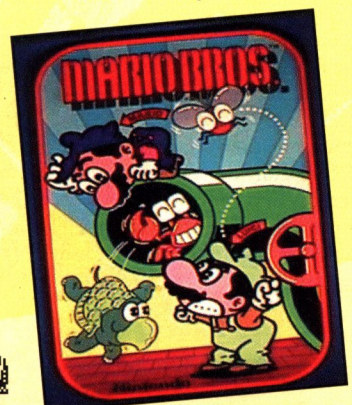
And there's another factor to be considered here. Back in the old days, the average pixel was about the size of your fist and sound effects were limited to simple 'beep' noises. With no pretty visuals or epic soundtracks to distract the player, programmers were forced to concentrate on the gameplay first and foremost. Today there is far, far too much emphasis on the importance of ultimately superfluous bells and whistles. Why? Well, I believe it's because most software houses have lost the sodding plot, that's why. The pizza-stained T-shirts are at the beck and call of the empty-headed 'suits', who couldn't give a monkey's whether the 'product' is any good, just as long as it grosses fifteen bazillion dollars. Sad but true.

As long as computer games exist, there will always be the odd 'classic' that springs up and reaffirms your devotion to them. It pains me to say it, but right now, from where I'm standing, I see a whole lot of chaff... and nowhere near enough wheat. **Z**



They really don't make 'em like this anymore...

Looking back on all these dusty, rusty old titles, it's remarkable to note how much *fun* most of them were at the time. I don't think it's unfair to say that, given the technology of the day, the games of yesteryear often managed to be a lot more *fun* than some of today's million dollar clunkers. But why?



NOW: Descent 1 and 2

Although often dismissed as 'Doom in a Spaceship', *Descent* is a completely different game in its own right. Pilot your tiny spacecraft through insanely complex three-dimensional tunnels and caverns, all the time chased by a gang of psychotic robots intent on bloody murder. Causes disorientation, claustrophobia and motion sickness, all at the same time. Best to lay some plastic sheeting on the floor before you start playing.

THEN: Scramble (Arcade)

One of the most annoying games ever. You're a fresh young space pilot sent in to sort out a bit of bother on some planet or other. So far, so good. Problem is, for reasons beyond the realm of normal human understanding, you've got to fly your craft through a series of awkward twisting tunnels - quite why you don't just get out and walk is beyond me. Even more ludicrously, these tunnels (that no one in their right mind would attempt to traverse in a high-speed spaceship) are protected with ground-to-air missiles and enemy 'things' that shoot you. Cue hour after hour of "I'm going to get past that bit THIS TIME if it KILLS me" action. Punctuated by vicious swearing.

WHAT IT'S GOT IN COMMON WITH DESCENT: Spacecraft, missiles, lots of nasty tunnels... and loads of frustrating moments.



VideoLogic GrafixStar 600 vs IMS TwinTurbo-128S



"Hey everybody, here's some graphics cards! Let's talk frame rates!" cries **Dave Mathleson**, quite overcome with excitement at the prospect of putting a couple through the *Quake* bake-off. Ah, bless 'im.

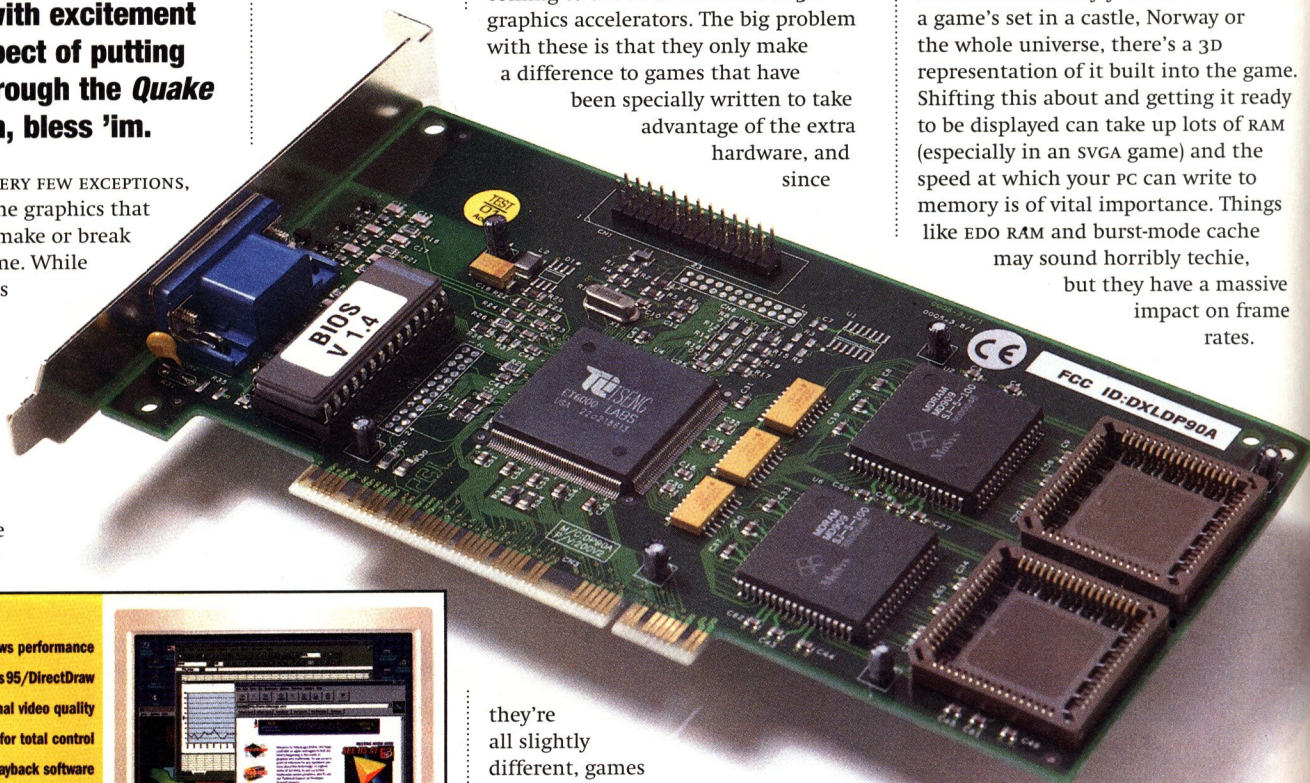
WITH VERY FEW EXCEPTIONS, it's the graphics that will make or break a game. While the sound effects in *Doom*, *Quake* and the rest are satisfyingly pant-soilingly realistic, you're not going to be fooled into thinking you're a big burly space marine if you're

hardware rather than relying on the genius of games developers.

Those who have been reading these pages over the past few months might have noticed that this technology is coming to the PC in the form of 3D graphics accelerators. The big problem with these is that they only make a difference to games that have been specially written to take advantage of the extra hardware, and since

updated. The slower your CPU, the longer these calculations take and therefore the slower the frame rate.

The second factor that can affect graphics speed is the type of motherboard and memory you have. Whether a game's set in a castle, Norway or the whole universe, there's a 3D representation of it built into the game. Shifting this about and getting it ready to be displayed can take up lots of RAM (especially in an SVGA game) and the speed at which your PC can write to memory is of vital importance. Things like EDO RAM and burst-mode cache may sound horribly techie, but they have a massive impact on frame rates.



Lightning fast Windows performance
Optimized for Windows 95/DirectDraw
Exceptional video quality
SmartTools software for total control
Free MPEG playback software
Five year warranty
Unlimited technical support



GrafixStar 600

Lightning Fast 128-bit Windows Acceleration



they're all slightly different, games companies haven't exactly been flooding the market with different versions of their software.

It's slow, Joe

Until Direct3D or some other standard is in place, and until the same games work regardless of what 3D hardware you've got fitted, the battle is how to extract the best performance with 'traditional' hardware. The frame rate in a 3D game is dependent on three main areas. First, before graphics are even displayed on the screen, there's a lot of work that needs to be done, and extra-realistic tricks like Gouraud shading, texture-mapping and lighting all involve thousands of complex calculations each time the screen is

running round Moonbase Jerky being chased by the blocky monsters.

While there are some ace games that aren't 3D (*Command & Conquer* and *X-COM*, for example), the real killers are always those that use first-person perspective, but getting things to look good on this front is a real struggle, even on a fast PC. Although the new breed of consoles are all much closer to arcade machines than a Pentium, they achieve this by using specialised 3D

(Above) The GrafixStar 600 may not have 3D bits, but it zips along all the same.

Pay and display

Of course, since this is graphics we're dealing with, surely the best solution is to get a faster graphics card? Well, if you've got a horribly slow one that was fitted to your PC then yes, it should help. Remember though, a Windows-accelerating graphics card won't do anything clever under DOS, as all it will basically do is take a chunk of memory and convert it into something your monitor can display. This memory, known as the 'frame buffer', is usually 1 or 2MB (the amount affects the

resolution and number of colours that can be displayed) and the speed of this memory makes a big difference to the card's performance. Cheaper cards are fitted with DRAM, which has nothing to do with

Scotsmen getting pissed but is basically the same as the normal RAM in your PC.

However, the two cards here both use faster types of memory. The TwinTurbo-128S uses VRAM, which has been used on more expensive cards for a while now, while the new GraftixStar 600 has MDRAM which is apparently as fast as VRAM.

The GraftixStar 600 is one of the first cards on the market to use the Tseng Labs ET6000 chipset, while the TwinTurbo uses IMS's own. Most graphics cards will use one of a pretty small set of chipsets, and the clever stuff on the part of the card manufacturer is usually what kind of memory to use.

Installing graphics cards shouldn't prove much of a hassle anyway, and in this respect neither card caused any problems. There's the usual collection of Windows applets for changing colour depth, resolution and general farting around with settings, but they're not interesting enough to warrant any further detail. The GraftixStar also comes with video-editing software and the Xing software MPEG player.

The performance of both cards under Windows was good and snappy. Of course, you don't usually get a pile of mates round just so that you can say, "Oooh, look! Did you see how quickly that dialogue box got redrawn?", as dos performance is the only thing

that matters to the frame-rate hungry gamer. To test

the cards, I opted for the fantabulous *Quake* over *Doom* as it supports several resolutions. As a reference I used a GraftixStar 400 card, which is lots cheaper than the two here and is also the kind of card that comes bundled with systems. The test was carried out at the first point you come out at after selecting 'New game', with one status bar on-screen.

As you can see from *The scores on the doors*, the GraftixStar 600 topped the speed stakes in the *Quake* test, followed by the GraftixStar 400 with the TwinTurbo trailing last. In Mode Six, for example, the difference between the 600 and the TwinTurbo is nearly three frames per second. However, the marginal difference between the two GraftixStars highlights the fact that if you've already got a reasonable card, splashing out on a new one isn't the best way to speed things up.

However, if your PC is already stuffed with the best bits and you want that extra couple of frames per second, the GraftixStar 600 will do nicely. The TwinTurbo, on the other hand, is one for the Windows user only. **Z**



The scores on the doors

QUAKE VIDMODE	GRAFIXSTAR 400	GRAFIXSTAR 600	TWINTURBO-128S
0	20.9	21.1	18.1
6	12.9	13.5	10.9
10	9.5	10.5	8.3

The tests were carried out on a Pentium 150 with 6Mb of RAM.



(Above) Twin Turbo? Twin Tub more like!

Score

80

A decent card that will definitely bring out the best in what you've got.

VideoLogic GraftixStar 600

Price: £199.99 **Release date:** Out now

Manufacturer: VideoLogic

Tel: 01923 260511



GATEWAY2000

"You've got a friend in the business."

Score

63

Disappointing DOS performance makes this one for the Windows-head only.

IMS TwinTurbo-128S

Price: £149 **Release date:** Out now

Manufacturer: Integrated Micro Solutions

Tel: 0171-498 0099



GATEWAY2000

"You've got a friend in the business."

GP500 Race Centre



Duncan Swain puts his foot down and enjoys a realistic burst of road rage with the GP500 Race Centre steering wheel and pedals.

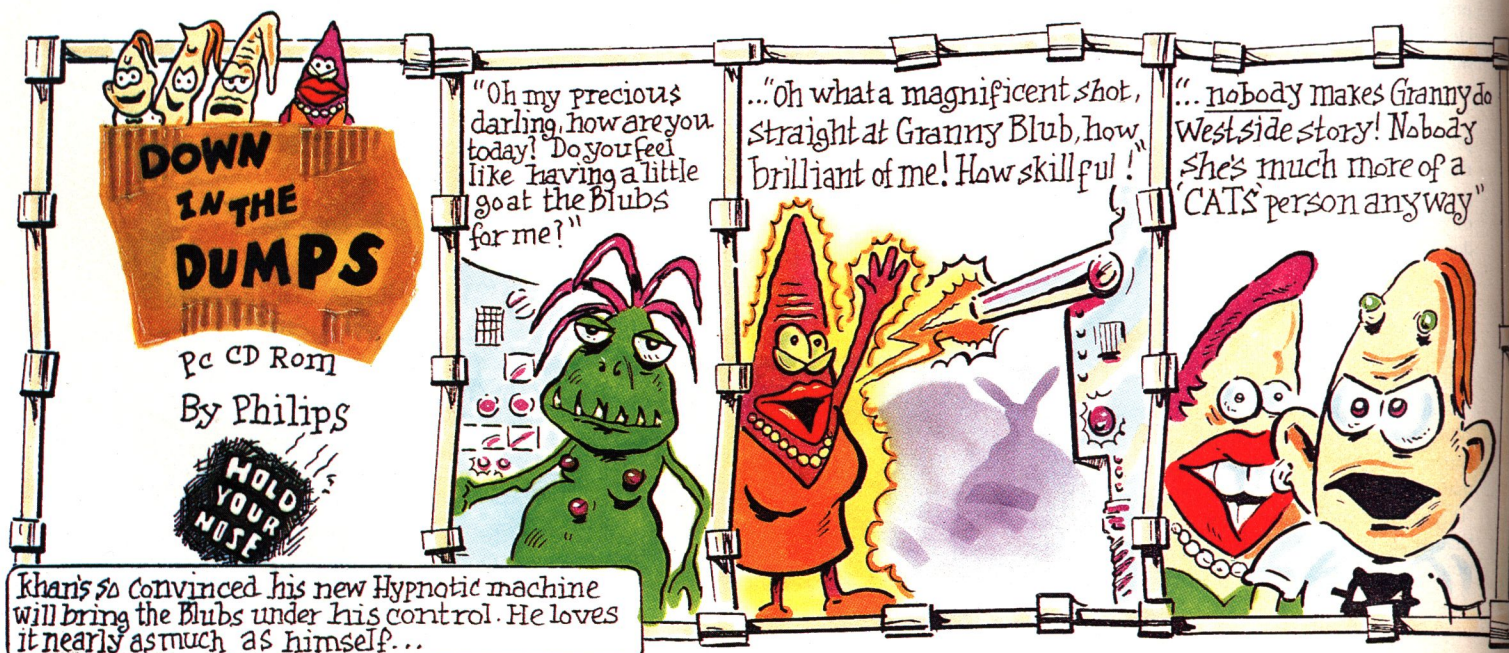
(Above) It's a shame it's not the Chea-P500.

CAR RACING GAMES HAVE LONG BEEN part of the staple PC diet. In the early days there was *Indy 500*, which led the way for *IndyCar* and *Formula 1 Grand Prix*, all of which were fairly decent considering the technology available at the time, even if they weren't eye-poppingly realistic. In recent years these titles have been improved upon, and even replaced by, vastly superior attempts such as *Sega Rally* and *Screamer 2*. This new wave of games are far more successful at recreating the unique feeling of having too much horsepower throbbing beneath your backside as you grapple round hairpin bends and slippery chicanes at breakneck speeds.

But one aspect that will always hold the genre back from achieving simulation nirvana is the means of controlling the cars. If you were driving round Silverstone at 175mph, would you want to rely on two centimetre-square buttons to guide your Formula 1 car past Gerhard Berger before you zip up the home straight? Or would you rather rely on the fine gear control afforded by your keyboard's A and Z keys to give you that extra burst of speed coming off the final bend at Indianapolis to win the Indy 500? Of course you wouldn't want to depend on either, so why should you have to use these unrealistic and fiddly controls for your PC? Well, happily there's now a third option: the GP500 Race Centre.

Brake for the border

The GP500 provides you with a 10-inch racing-style steering wheel and a pair of pedals that are compatible with any



Khan's so convinced his new Hypnotic machine will bring the Blubs under his control. He loves it nearly as much as himself...



(Above) Eating tarmac with F1GP2...

racing game. A lot of thought has gone into the design and the sturdy spring-loaded pedals possess an authentic feel for controlling breaking and acceleration. The steering wheel itself attaches to a thick metal steering column which in turn bolts easily onto a wooden board which should sit under either your monitor or (if it's on your desk) system unit. We simply sat it on the desk, and thanks to its rubber feet that hold it down there's no need for heavy duty clamps, so it's a lot less fuss to use and there's no hassle packing it up when you've had enough. Nor do you need software drivers - connection to the PC is by a standard 15-pin joystick adaptor that plugs straight into the joystick port on a sound card or game port so you don't have the rigmarole of installing a dedicated interface card. This simplicity is achieved by virtue of the fact that the GP500 works as a conventional joystick: the wheel is the x-axis and the pedals the y.

The version we looked at was fitted with a Vehicle Movement Simulator (£27.75) which adds an element of realism by vibrating the steering

column and emitting a slight hum. Although both the vibration and noise increase as you push down the accelerator, it wasn't sufficiently convincing to make you feel like you were on the starting grid at Monaco.

Another option, the Turbo Blower (£42.50), resembles a small hairdryer that sits on the steering column and supposedly gives you the feeling of wind rushing through your hair, but for the follically-challenged we suspect it might be a waste of time. Currently in production is a clutch pedal, F1 body shell and even a racing helmet with built-in screens for the true spotter.

Hands to the wheel

Setting up the steering wheel to use in NASCAR was a doddle: simply calibrate the pedals and steering wheel for the correct axis, and you're off. Gear changes are via either two buttons mounted towards the centre of the front of the steering wheel or by two paddles behind it where your fingers naturally rest when driving. If you're not careful with the calibration it can be difficult to maintain road contact because you end

up having to turn the wheel too far when cornering. The steering wheel can also be used as a standalone unit by using the paddles as accelerator and brake instead of the pedals.

The GP500 was impressive and in minutes it had attracted a small crowd of back-seat drivers eager to apply their own particular (and non too successful) driving styles to NASCAR. Using a steering wheel and proper pedals definitely enhances any driving game and makes the car easier to control. There's no frantic searching for the right buttons at the wrong time, and obviously anyone with a driving licence will find it far more natural than using the usual joystick or keyboard.

However, having given it a large thumbs up for performance, it gets an equally large thumbs down on the price front. Despite its commendable build quality and requisite sturdiness for hard usage - not to mention having all the necessary features in the right places - at £270 it could well be out of the reach of your average Sunday driver. **Z**

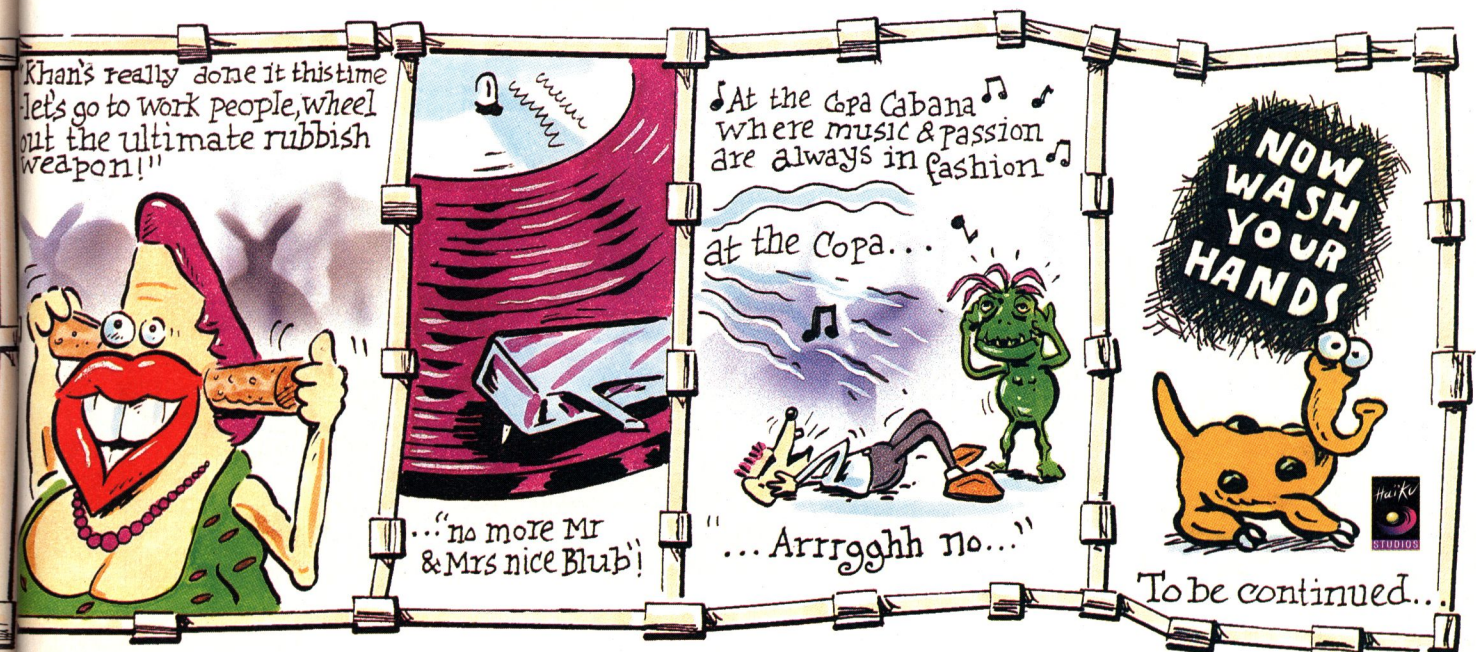
Score

74

A great toy if you've the wad to spare.

Price: £269.95 **Release date:** Out now
Manufacturer: RC Simulations
Tel: 01275 474550

GATEWAY2000
"You've got a friend in the business."



ZONE

ON-LINE

Quake vs
The Spectrum

**Quake and
The Spectrum on
opposing pages? Now
if that isn't ironic, we'll eat our
hard drive. David McCandless reports.**

WILL *Quake*'s HYPER-REALISTIC swimming character drown in a wave of nostalgia where other games such as *Little Computer People*, *DeathChase 2000* and *Cybernoid* have dissolved like Junior Disprin in a soup of the purest sadness? Will *Quake*'s cutting-edge 3D graphics and addictive multi-player gameplay overcome colour clash and the Kempston joystick? Can the architecturally complex caverns of *Quake* outdo the cunning platforms and 'melty' walkways of *Manic Miner*? Can the CD-based soundscapes of Trent Reznor triumph over the single-channel hornet's-nest-in-a-can-of-

shaken-up-Sprite sound effects of the Spectrum? Will 640x480x256 triumph over 256x192x16? (Little resolution joke there.) Could the Speccy's algorithms for banishing colour clash prove more complex than iD Software's 3D engine? And will *Quake*'s mighty weapons and dexterity survive a flanking manoeuvre from the Commodore 64 and a sly little pincer movement from both the Amstrad CPC and the BBC Model B? Don't hold your breath, because these and many other questions will be answered...

SLAP THAT SPOOGE

This month could well have witnessed the release of the greatest and most technically advanced game ever – *Quake* – but our spooge had barely slapped the ceiling before we hit upon a superb new little ZX Spectrum emulator, WSpecEm by Rui FF Ribeiro which runs under Windows 95. Seizing the opportunity for a clever juxtaposition, we put *Quake*, that babe of all blast 'em ups, alongside some of the oldest, crappiest and ugliest jouets ever created. Amusing, eh?

AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY...

For those who were either born post-1980 or who believe games only sprang into being with the PlayStation, here's a dab of historical context for you. Around 1983 the first colour home computer, the Sinclair ZX Spectrum, was launched on an unsuspecting UK public, and it was incredible for several reasons. One,



Five of the best games in the world*

MANIC MINER

A platform game whereby *Miner Willy* has to navigate through 20 surreal caverns, collecting keys while dodging poisonous plants and monsters and all that. Levels included *Eugene's Lair*, *Attack Of The Mutant Telephones* and the seminal *Solar Power Generator*, and it demanded a range of skills including dexterity, spatial reasoning, quick reflexes and, of course, an abject lack of a social life. It spawned a host of imitators, most notably Gremlin's (yes, that Gremlin's) *Monty Mole* (anti-Thatcherite mole saves striking miners).



JETPAC

Incredibly repetitive gameplay, flickering graphics and limited level design, but back then it was like a bunch of cavemen being shown a garlic crusher.

Now you can barely play it for three minutes without your brain shutting down, but it made Ultimate Play The Game a household name. Today the company's called Rare and produces stuff like *Donkey Kong Country*.



KNIGHTLORE



The *Quake* of its generation. The first true 3D game, it was a stroke of genius which combined puzzle-solving and the first use of 'masking' (putting graphics behind other graphics).

Not, you'll agree, as realistic as some modern efforts.

AVALON

The first great 3D RPG ever, *Avalon* (programmed by Brit genius Steve Turner who now runs his own company and does stuff for MicroProse) was the forerunner of *Ultima Underworld*, combining puzzles and trolls in an engrossing dungeon romp. And believe it or not, it's still as damn playable as ever.

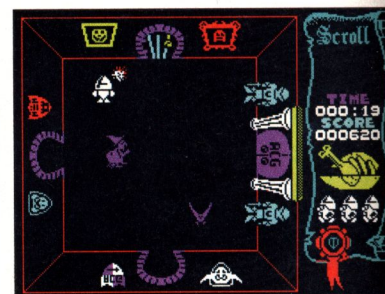
*well, they were at the time

JET SET WILLY

The sequel to *Manic Miner* and quite the most engrossing game in existence. It shared the same format as its predecessor except you



could move from room to room and explore an entire 'virtual world'. Unfortunately, this led to the multiple death bug. You can also thank JSW for pioneering copy-protection which required you to read an unreadable, unphotocopiable colour chart. Luckily, the downloadable version is (ssshhhhhh) cracked.





Other servers

These may or may not be up. These may or may not be fast. The UK servers will probably be much faster than the US ones. You can but try...

-146.227.102.101	Leicester, UK	10 players
-130.89.231.110	Netherlands	12 players
-194.247.66.227	UK	8 players
-193.114.84.16	Belfast	10 players
-35.8.160.115	Michigan	16 players
-139.169.31.199	UK	8 players
-193.133.80.16	Frontier	8 players
-152.15.13.18	UK	10 players

There are hundreds out there.

it was colour. No big deal, you might scoff, but for kids weaned on *Champion The Wonder Horse* and the monochromatic Pong, it was a sizeably large deal. Point number two, it cost £100, and while this might now be the modern day equivalent of £4500, at the time it put it within the reach of the masses. Three, it had 48k of memory – yes, 48 kilobytes of RAM. Now this is smaller than Windows Calculator (58k), much smaller than a picture of a naked Uma Thurman (202k), and over 20,000 times smaller than the average modern hard disk (1GB). Finally, it had a rubber keyboard which might seem funny with hindsight but at the time was terrible.

Despite these extreme disadvantages, the ZX Spectrum – alongside its lesser cousins the Commodore C64 (American), the BBC B (expensive), and the Dragon 32 (just plain shite) – became the fountain of all gamesplaying. Its tiny form bred an extraordinary generation of programmers, graphic artists, journalists (and outbreaks of acne) and provided the backbone for more or less every game you play today, be it on your PC, on your mate's PlayStation, or whatever.

YEAH, RIGHT

Basically, all this hoo-hah is because PC processing has reached a point whereby we can begin to rediscover these golden moments. Some people have photos, some have music, others have stupidly verbose and self-obsessed diaries. We fellow gamers, however, have Spectrum games to mark our passage through the



(Right) Some easily accessible FTP sites have (literally) thousands of games.



(Above) Sir Clive. Mr Sinclair. The King. The Emperor. God.

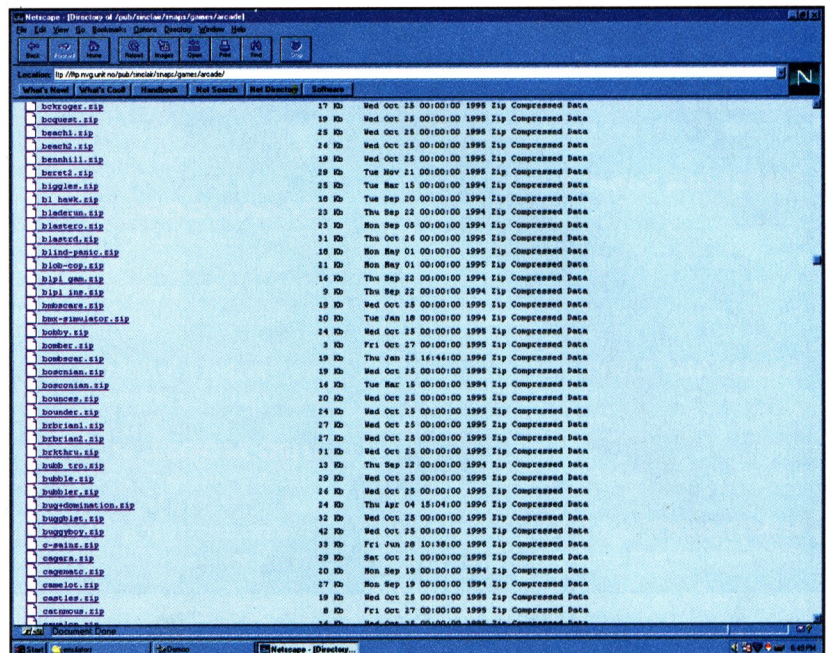
(Below) Sabre Wulf: roving African in boxy jungle.

(Right) *The Hobbit*: the first great graphical adventure, starring Thorin, Gandalf, Gollum and you.



Quake server of the month

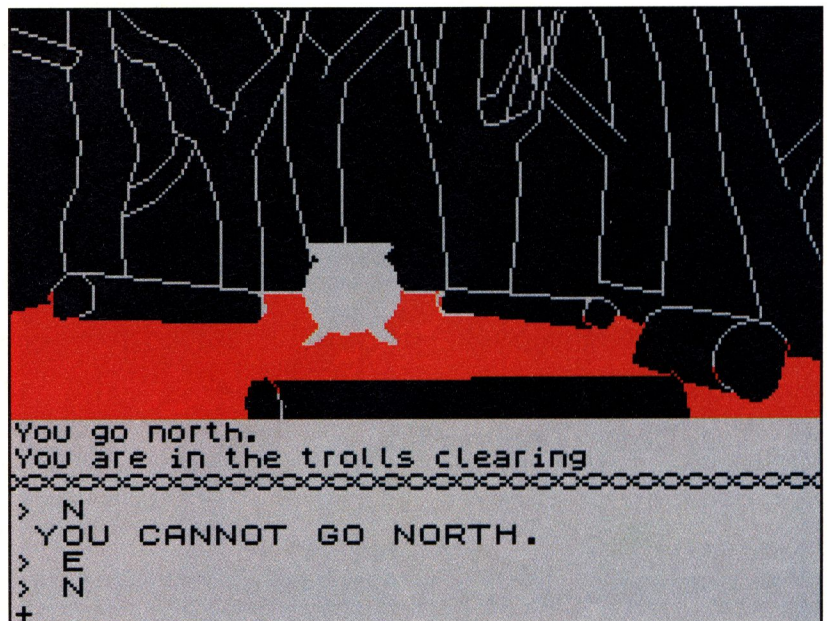
By far and away the fastest and smoothest *Quake* server in this country is the one attached to the CIX Internet. The IP address is 194.153.1.2, but the only snag is that you need a CIX IP account to play. You might think this sounds a bit pants, but believe us, it keeps the server fast and the scum out. Call 0181-296 2666 for more details.



decades and collinades of empty Oxy-10 bottles and bring back those warm sticky sensations of youth. You know you're old when some stick insect of a sprog (who hasn't the faintest idea what *Battle Of The Planets* is) stares at an old Speccy game and irksomely points out (albeit fairly) that it's crap. You know you're *really* old when you beat the living shit out of him for even making the point, but there again, perhaps you're just psychotic.

Basically, give Rui Ribeiro's WinSpeccy emulator a whirl – you'll find it lurking on this month's cover disc in ONLINE/SPECCY along with Microsoft's

WIN-G graphics resources (you'll need this to run it). If it doesn't bring a warm, oily feel to your cockles, then unlucky mate. Due to copyright restrictions we are unable to bring you any games because they are still licensed to their original creators. However, you can find vast amounts on the Internet, especially if you tune into FTP.NVG.UNIT.NO, a Norwegian site which has megabytes of old Spectrum snapshots (pretty impressive when you consider each game is only around 49K). The vast archives there also contain games and emulators covering all the popular 'others' you may be interested in.





And the rest

Oh, how attitudes have changed since the golden days of gaming. If you want to wear a wetsuit with the bum cut out, that's fine. If you want to live in San Francisco and grow a little moustache, then that's fine too. Similarly, if you want to believe that the Commodore 64, the Oric, the BBC B or the shitey Apple II were, historically speaking, in some way superior to the Spectrum, then that's fine too. We think you'll understand the Spectro-centric point we're making. If you want to find other emulators, you could do worse than look up these URLs:

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM

<http://ns.rtc-carlow.ie/student/obrienk/spectrum.html>
<http://www.accessorie.com/~mcoward/specsoft.htm>
<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~uzdm0006/Damien/speccy/index.html>
<http://ftp.nvg.unit.no/pub/sinclair/snaps/games>

SINCLAIR ZX81

<http://www.gre.ac.uk/%7Eb10/z81.faq>
<ftp://oak.oakland.edu/simtel/msdos/emulator/xtndr09.3.zip>
<http://www.csv.warwick.ac.uk/~mauqx/sinclair>

NINTENDO (NES)

<http://www.freeflight.com/fms/iNES>

SUPER NINTENDO (SNES)

<http://www.thepoint.net/%7Elepper/>
<http://www.anthrox.com/>
<http://iceonline.com/home/thebrain/vsmc/vsmc.htm>

AMSTRAD CPC 64

<http://www-users.informatik.rwth-aachen.de/~crux>
<http://http.earlham.edu/www/students/stanlje/index.htm>
<ftp://ftp.ibp.fr/pub/amstrad/emulator>
<http://www.adam.com.au/~r-taylor/>

COMMODORE 64

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/%7Egvincent/>
<ftp://utopia.hacktic.nl/pub/c64/misc/c64cd96.lha>
<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/pc64>
ftp://ftp.funet.fi/pub/cbm/c64/emulation/pc64/pc64_e.zip
<ftp://frodo.hiof.no/pub/c64/emulator>
<http://www.aloha.net/~bstaggs/c64.html>

BBC MODEL B

<http://www.idt.unit.no/~robert/bbc/emulators.htm>
<ftp://ftp.compsoe.man.ac.uk/pub/beebem>
<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/~n5013784/bbc-emu.htm>

<http://www.cistron.nl/~wouters/bbc/bbc-etc.html>
<http://www.cs.vu.nl/~gerben/acom/>

GAMEBOY

<http://www.freeflight.com/fms/Gameboy>
<ftp://ftp.altair.komkon.com/pub/Gameboy/VGB>
<http://hiwaay.net/~jfhrowei/gameboy/pcboy001.arj>

ATARI V2600

<http://www.dcs.warwick.ac.uk/~wilhor/x2600.html>
<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/9461/emulate.html>
<http://styx.uwa.edu.au/cyllene/darrins/2600/2600.html>
<http://www.csun.edu/~hbbuse08/classic.html>
<http://www.owl.net.rice.edu/~dgb/museum/texts/2600.emu.faq>

COLECOVISION

<http://www.freeflight.com/fms/ColEm/ColemWin.zip>
<ftp://altair.komkon.com/pub/Coleco/ColEm/>
<http://www.csun.edu/~hbbuse08/classic.html>

GENERAL STUFF

<comp.emulators.misc>
<http://www.why.net/home/adam/cem/>
<http://members.aol.com/chrisalo/emu1.htm>
<alt.binaries.emulators.cbm>

Quakin' across the net

THE WHOLE INTERNET IS reverberating with the sound of gibbs splashing into lava and lesser players choking on their own splintering windpipes. Feel left out? Feel like you can't get a game because you're too dense to work out TCP/IP? Join the club - we don't know what TCP/IP is. Luckily, help is on hand from our chums at CIX who will gladly talk us through the process.

Two-player game via modem

Okay, here's a quick walkthrough of how to get a direct-dialled game of *Quakus* going through your modems, and our thanks to Horton on CIX for this one. You will need:

- A modem
- A copy of *Quake* v1.01 (this fixes modem game bugs)

- A reasonably fast machine
- A brain.

Basically, one of you will have to be the server, the other one the client. The fastest machine should always be the server, and once you've worked that bit out, run *Quake* and follow these instructions...

On the server:

1. Choose 'Multiplayer' from the main menu and then 'Setup'
2. Set up your colour and name as you desire
3. Choose 'Accept Changes' and then press return
4. Choose 'New Game' and then select 'Modem'
5. Select the appropriate comport and baud rate for your modem



(Above) Kick some plums with your *Quake* deathmatch chums.

6. Choose 'Modem Setup' and then configure things for your modem
 7. Choose 'OK'
 8. Set your gameplay preferences and then choose 'Begin game when ready'.
- The server is now primed and ready to go. Now you have to wait for Thickie-Two-Shoes to come and connect to you.

On the client:

1. As above
2. As above
3. As above
4. Choose 'Join A Game' and then 'Modem'
5. Select the appropriate comport and baud rate for your modem
6. Choose 'Modem Setup' and set it all up
7. Insert your friend's phone number
8. Choose 'Connect when ready'.

Step-by-step Quake over the Internet

This walkthrough is supplied courtesy of IvorB of CIX and a bunch of hard-working *Quake*heads who are going to have phone bills the size of small



middle European countries come the end of this quarter. You will need:

1. A copy of *Quake*, preferably the most recent version, which is currently 1.01; this is also the retail and shareware version. The earlier versions will work but you might experience adverse effects due to bugs in the network and modem code. (Alternatively, if you're getting consistently pummelled in network games, use a lower version and blame it all on iD.)

2. An account with an Internet Service Provider (ISP). This is a dial-up or PPP account with a company like Demon, EasyNet or Netcom. This is not an on-line service account (such as CompuServe, CIX conferencing or AOL) which may have Internet access. These won't work.

3. You'll need a copy of *QUAKE PPP* which is on this month's cover disc (in *ONLINE/PPP*). This works in DOS. You can get deathmatch over the Internet through Windows 95's TCP/IP network, but it's too complicated to explain here. So, we won't, and besides, this is easier.

4. You'll also need a modem.

So basically, if you have all the above, you'll also have the following:

Your log-in name

This could be your domain name (ie blah.demon.co.uk) or just your user name (thebest@cix.compulink.co.uk).

Your password

You should know this, but remember it's case-sensitive.

Your IP address

For example, 193.154.3.12. You should've been given this when you started your IP account. If you don't have one, phone up your ISP and get it.

A dial-in number for your ISP

This should be your local dial-in point or POP.

1. Unzip *QUAKEPPP* in an appropriate directory other than your *QUAKE* directory. Let's say you unzip them into C:\PPP

2. Edit your *CONFIG.SYS* and add these two lines:

```
DEVICE=C:\PPP\ETHDEV.SYS
```

```
DEVICE=C:\PPP\TCPIP.SYS 2048
```

If you're clever, you may want to create a multi-boot with an option to load these babies.

(Above) Play in co-operative mode, and why not wear a wetsuit with the bottom cut out while you're at it?

(Above right) Get your fiends to sit on your broomstick.



3. Enter the C:\PPP directory and edit the file *NET.CFG* until it reads something like this (most of it will be there already):

```
LINK SUPPORT
BUFFERS 8 1500
MEMPOOL 8192
LINK DRIVER PPP
CONFIGURATION "Current"
FRAME ETHERNET_II
PORT <insert the comport of your modem>
BAUD 57600
FLOW CONTROL HARDWARE
CONNECTION AUTODIAL
OPEN ACTIVE
DIAL <the telephone number of your ISP>
MODEM NAME "My modem"
MODEM INITI "ATZ"
PCOMP ON
ACCOMP ON
SCRIPT 1 "name:" "<insert your user name>\r" 5
SCRIPT 2 "word:" "<insert your password>\r" 5
SCRIPT 3 "ster>" "ppp <your IP address>\r" 5
```

Note that the password is case-sensitive – we haven't made a mistake and we *did* mean "word:" and "ster>". Also, if you're clever you can mess around with your init strings. Some modems will prefer "AT&F" instead of "ATZ".

4. Make a batch file called *INITPPP.BAT* (just type edit *INITPPP.BAT* and save it after you've typed this in):

```
@ECHO OFF
ECHO Setting QuakePPP stuff
lsl
```

Disclaimer

Look dudes, we're trying to help you here. All this information is to the best of our knowledge correct. This is how we all play *Quake*, but if it doesn't work for you, please don't phone us to ask why, because we've told you everything we know and we have nothing more to divulge. Honest, so don't do it kids.

```
ppp
```

```
pppmenu
```

```
pppstate wait ip
```

```
pppwait
```

```
ipstub
```

```
setupip
```

```
slipip <your IP address>
```

5. Make another batch file called *SHUTPPP* and make it look like this:

```
@ECHO OFF
```

```
ECHO Shutting down QUAKEPPP stuff
```

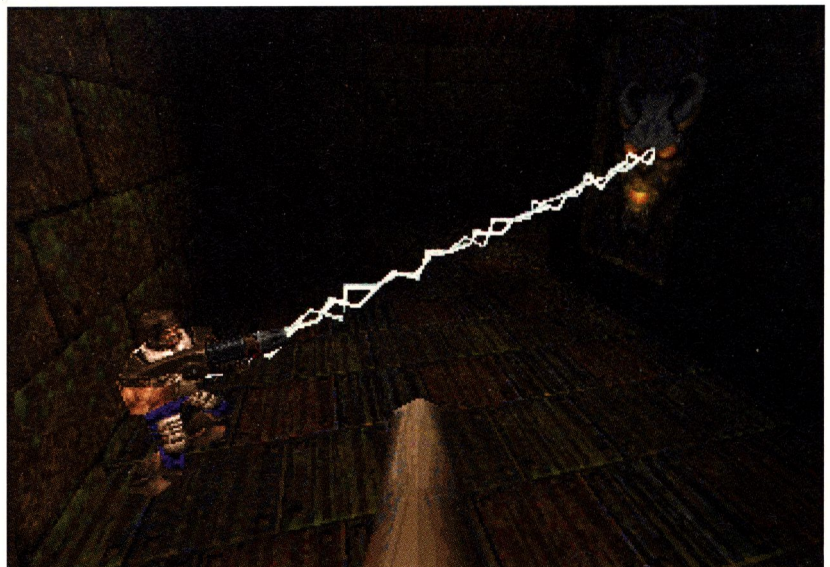
```
ipstub unload
```

```
ppp u
```

```
lsl /u
```

6. That's it. Almost. Now – check that you've rebooted with those two new lines in your *CONFIG.SYS*, and simply enter your PPP directory, type *INITPPP* and a menu will appear. Highlight *CONNECT* and press return twice. Sit back while your modem connects and logs in. After about 30 seconds the menu will pronounce: "IP OPEN". Exit the program into DOS and go into your *QUAKE* directory. Run *QUAKE* and then bring down the console as soon as it's ready. Then type *CONNECT* and the IP address of a Quake Server (ie *CONNECT 194.153.1.2*) and you're in.

7. Note: if the console reports that it's "TRYING...STILL TRYING..." to connect, it means that either a) the IP server doesn't exist; b) it's been turned off (some are only up during certain parts of the day); c) it's full and can't accept any more players; or d) you've mistyped the IP address. If you get no response from any servers, something could be wrong with your set-up. **Z**



(Right) If you type 'REGISTERED 1' into the console, you can use the lightning gun in shareware *Quake*.

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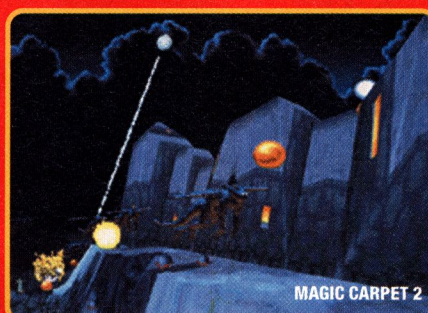
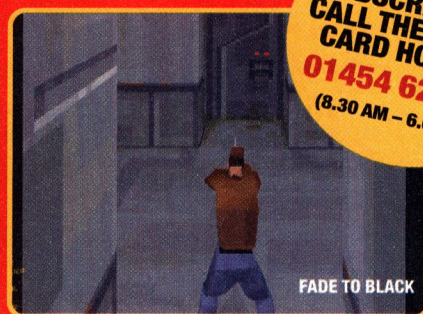
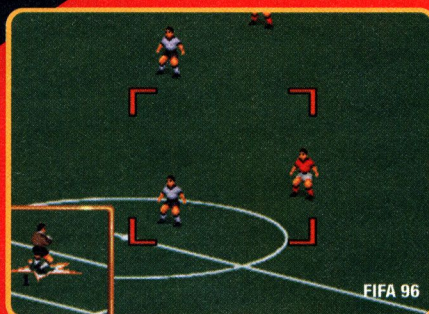
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"HOLIDAY IN VIRTUALAND" episode three

Hex Download Joe Winsock

by charlie brooker

THE STORY SO FAR... Hex Download has somehow ended up inside her computer, in a weird sort of "cyberspace" place. Anyway, Joe Winsock, her boyfriend, is trying to work out where on earth she is...

HEX! HEX! WHERE ARE YOU?

SIGH! I MAY AS WELL FACE FACTS. SHE'S GONE. GONE FOREVER.

I'M GOING TO MISS HER... BUT MY LIFE MUST GO ON. I'VE GOT TO KEEP MYSELF TOGETHER. MUSTN'T DO ANYTHING RASH..

I WILL SURVIVE!!

FIVE MINUTES LATER... HOPE THAT KNOT'S TIGHT ENOUGH...

SUDDENLY... HIYA J- UM. HI, TERRY.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?

HEX HAS GONE. I'M GOING TO KILL MYSELF... PLUS, SUICIDE IS "IN"

DON'T BE SO BLOODY STUPID! GET OFF THAT CHAIR NOW!

OH. IT TOOK ME AGES TO TIE THIS NOOSE.

LATER... HERE - HAVE SOME COFFEE. AND FOR GOD'S SAKE, CHEER UP!

HOW CAN I? I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT HER!

RUBBISH. BEING A SAD, LONELY BACHELOR IS EASY!!! IT IS?

SURE! JUST SO LONG AS YOU'VE GOT...

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JESUS CHRIST! THAT'S TOO DEPRESSING TO EVEN THINK ABOUT!!! BUT I'VE BEEN DOING IT FOR YEARS!

WELL NOT ME! NO SIRE!! I'M GOING TO FIND HER!!! SOMEHOW, I'M GOING TO GET HER BACK!!

MEANWHILE... WHERE THE HECK AM I NOW?..

CONTINUES NEXT ISSUE...

TROUBLESHOOTER

We've had a right job on our hands this month persuading the Boggit to come out of his dank little hideaway – he doesn't take too well to sunny skies and the sight of people in skimpy shorts. Still, after promising a crate of beer and a week's supply of onion bhajis, we eventually got the vertically challenged whinger to deliver his usual hints, tips, wise words and ravings.



Write to PC Zone

If you have a query concerning a role-playing game or adventure, or you have a hot tip or a cheat to share, then write to:

The Boggit
29 Blackthorn Drive
Larkfield, Aylesford
Kent ME20 6NR

READ THIS!

Because our tips line is so busy, and because the man who answers the phone is only a mere mortal, we need you to prove that you have actually bought the magazine and that you're not just a freeloading blagger. To do this, our tips geezer will ask you for a password before you request your tip. This month's password is... "Abracadabra".



The Secret Of Monkey Island

This letter isn't just from a desperate man, but a desperate husband too. In an attempt to introduce my wife to computer games I got a copy of Monkey Island. Great! She loves it. However, she's stuck – and boy do I know it.

She's reached Monkey Island, she's chatted to the natives about the head of the navigator, got hold of a small skull from the hut and entered the catacombs under the monkey's head. However, she still has the compass and thinks this is what's preventing her from finding the way to LeChuck. Please help her.

Tim Cole, London

Your trouble is that you're using the wrong head – you should be using the 'handsome' head that you wore on your wedding day, not the fat, ugly one that you've been wearing of late. Ask your wife, and she'll explain.

Your wife is also using the wrong head. To find her way through the caves she needs to get hold of the navigator's head from the cannibals. She must persuade them to give her the head in exchange for the "How to get A Head" leaflet she got from Stan.

System Shock

I'm having untold difficulties with System Shock. After battling my way through a huge chunk of the game, I just can't get through the first door on the security level (level 8). This is located after accessing the lift at the bottom of level 7. Please help me – it's doing my head in really badly.

Gareth Powell, Deeside

It's difficult to know what to say as you haven't explained why you can't get through the door. Have you tried knocking? In the

hope that something I know might be of help, here are a few pointers which might perform the old 'open sez me' trick.

Whenever you come across them, destroy all cameras and computer nodes as this will lower the level of security. Doors or switches that say "blocked by level security" will all work when level security equals zero. Others will open when security drops to approximately ten per cent.

You can't get into level 8 until the reactor has been set to destruct, and it will open when you touch it. Unfortunately however, the reactor cannot be destroyed until the antenna on level 7 has been put out of action and you have received authorisation from Earth to scuttle the station.

Discworld

Bestest buddy, please help! I don't want a winner's guide to Discworld, just please point me in the right direction. I'm in the cottage in the Dark Woods and I'm getting @\$\$'t'ken annoyed.

David Burdess, Wallington

You've done so well I think you deserve a coconut – and here's how to get one. If you move the mouse pointer around the world map, way out to the north-east, you should find the Edge of the World. Pop out there and you will find a coconut tree. Fool around with the tree and the coconut will fall off and land in the water. You'll be able to scoop the nut up with your butterfly net, and then open it using the screwdriver.

You have many options now, one of which is to visit the fishmonger and the toilet in the alley. Because you told me what objects you have, I know you have all you need to get caviar and a gold buckle from him. With the coconut milk, the cornflour and the egg, you can now satisfy Big Sal. You also have the net with which you can capture the butterfly that hangs around in the park.

Ishar I

I managed to finish this game without collecting the rune from the forbidden house, but I've always wondered what the correct method for obtaining it was.

When the characters enter the house they start to die from some curse or whatever. I found it was possible to get

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HEX	DECIMAL
09H	09
0AH	10
0FH	15
10H	16
20H	32
28H	40
32H	50
40H	64
63H	99
64H	100
C8H	200
FAH	250
FFH	255

round this by letting four of the characters die and having the fifth resurrect them, after which they were no longer affected. This meant that I lost the fifth character and the other's experience reduced to zero. Surely there must be a more straightforward way?

David Honeyman, Perth

Well, let me tell you what the official manual says, and I can't say better than that: "Enter hut, take parchment from Jon - it contains the magic prescriptions connected with those given at the end of the manual."

That's all she wrote!

Little Big Adventure

I have asked for your help in the past, and now I've followed your lead and upgraded to a PC. In *Little Big Adventure* I can't get on the boat. Any tips on how to buy a ticket would be appreciated.

Andy Nash, Surrey

You'll get no favours around here just because I took pity on you in the past, my little sunshine. Just step up close, listen to the answer, and then beat it.

You can't buy a ticket, you're going to have to earn one. Beat up the guard at the port, then knock out the Grobo that guards the gate. Grab the key that he leaves behind. Enter the port and talk to the elephant on the dock. If you move the crates for the elephant (it's a sliding block puzzle), you'll be given a ferry ticket in return.

Noctropolis

I've spoken to the Whisperman and he told me to get to the top of the Sunspire Tower to confront Flux, but I'm unable to do this. Can you help?

Robert Tracey, Huddersfield

As you've already found, you can't get into the Sunspire building. Instead, you'll have to get up there via the Cygnus building. Enter the elevator and use the logbook to get onto the roof. You can now use the hook from the Butcher's Shop to slide to the Sunspire Tower.

Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis

I'm in the outer maze of Atlantis and I can't find the object that will help Sophia get out of the cage. What is it? Where do I find it?

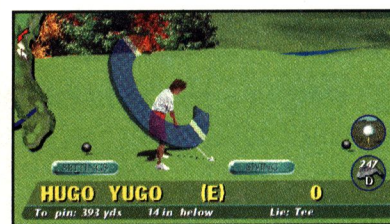
Also, where and how do I get the stuff that will extend the chain so I can fasten it up to both of the bronze loops? How am I supposed to arrange the statue parts in the chest plate?

Dougie Carter, Harrogate

Do I take it you're going to boast about how you cracked this game after I've done all the hard bits? On your conscience be it, but for a start, there's a diagram in the crescent gears cupboard. Once the bronze gear is on the upper peg, a power bead will move the arm forward. When it's on the lower peg the arm will move back. You don't need to extend the chain, just connect one end to the loop on the door and then move the arm. Finally, move the arm back to open the door. A hinge pin will fall out and that's the object you are seeking to free Sophia.

(Right) There isn't much time to finish *Discworld* before the sequel arrives!

(Far right) *PGA Tour 96*: We've shown a picture of a female player 'cos only wusses cheat!



When I was a lad, real men didn't cheat. No, you either developed super-fast reactions and serious joystick muscles, or died! For all of you wet-behind-the-ears upstarts who can't stand the pace, here is your sick note for the End of Level Guardian.



Quake

Quake is the latest dungeon-dodging *Doom* clone, and like its predecessor it has lots of built-in cheats. However, you can't just type the commands during the game to activate them. All cheats must be entered at the console screen which is selected from the options menu.

FLY

This command enables you to float serenely around the dungeon ceiling. Simply press the jump key and you'll take off like a bird/bat.

GOD

Guess what this does.

IMPULSE 9

This will give you all weapons and all keys.

NOCLIP

Now you can walk through walls.

KILL

Type this command to be struck down dead.

GIVE H 200

Gives full health.

MAP E1M#

Substitute a number between 1 and 7 for the '#' and you'll be warped to that level. If you insert the number '8' you'll be transported to a secret level where there is zero gravity.

Here are two tips which may be useful when playing death matches:

1) Choose your character's uniform colour to blend in with the dark dungeon walls. 2) Bright colours are more easily spotted and shot at!

You can use the NAME command (ie NAME BOGGIT) to customise the messages which other networked players will see when you interact with them, such as, "You have just been blasted by Boggit!"

Advanced Tactical Fighters

Yet another flight sim for desktop pilots. Keep practising, because in time the pilot of your package tour really is going to keel over with food poisoning halfway across the Bay of Biscay.

Once the game is loaded, press <CTRL/ALT/SHIFT> (right side only). Hold these keys down and click on 'Play Single Mission' in the main menu and

you'll be able to fly missions from both campaigns. You can also use these keys to fly any plane in your custom missions. Create the mission while holding the keys down, exit, then enter again while holding the keys down once more.

Actua Soccer

Here's a cunning cheat for footie fans. If you've already done it, won it, and got the strip, start the game with the command: SOCCER-01142475549

And now you'll have a new team to contend with, called Gremlin XI.

(Submitted by Miles Dugmore)

PGA Tour 96

Why would anyone want a cheat for a golf game? Oh well, if you must have it, here it is. Type <ABBACAB> before driving the ball and you'll find that your club has been replaced by a jet-propelled, mutt's nuts driver that will smash the ball into the middle of next week.

Worms Reinforcements

Still wriggling with this game? Then type <BOBJOB> during play and you'll get the message "CHEATMODE ACTIVATED". You will now gain unlimited sheep. (Just what kind of a sad game is this?)

If you decide to fight like a man, simply type the same command again to deactivate the cheat mode. On the other hand here are the level codes for the challenge mode levels:

1 ohsoeasy	2 unchains
3 bjornpop	4 dodgemax
5 starturn	6 heygeoff
7 rezdoggy	8 highkick
9 long ago	10 hey jon
11 satanics	12 neardead
13 scumbagz	14 good bye
15 truthout	16 17thkind
17 gogogo	18 pigspace
19 trumpton	20 paranoid
21 mixtures	22 very mad
23 insanity	24 greatgig

Destruction Derby

Here's how to knock lumps out of other people's cars without John Law dragging you off to the cop shop to sell you a few tickets for the Chief Constable's Ball. (By the way it's not a dance, it's a raffle!)

Use the following code words when asked for your name:

!DAMAGE!	Makes you invulnerable.
NPLAYERS	Choose the number of players.
REFLECT!	Practise laps through a monastery garden!

It's not all beer and skittles being a global dictator, because those pesky pixels can ruin your sleep and dominate your waking hours. If you've got barbarians at the gate, or you're in a spot of bother, then here's the answer to your prayers – the *PC Zone* Troubleshooter's Guide to Global Domination.

Civilization II



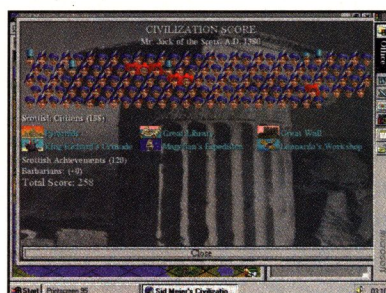
(Above) One man's partisan is another man's pain in the butt. Luckily, we have a cunning tactic for dealing with these guys.

(Above right) "Go forth and multiply" is the message. With a large population contributing taxes to your coffers you can buy up everything and everybody that stands in your way.

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO today? Shall you direct the Mongol hordes to the gates of Rome, or will you lead mankind in its dream of colonising the distant stars? Either way you're going to get a headache and a bloody nose on the road. To help all of you blood-thirsty despots and enlightened saints, we've pulled together years of empire building and cunning tricks to help you connive and cheat your way right to the top.

Getting started

No matter how you intend to pursue your final goal, first you need to get your civilisation up, running and producing



the essentials of life. In the early years it's a wise strategy to avoid producing soldiers and armaments, and concentrate instead in creating settlers who can build productive cities. Let your motto be "Go forth and multiply". While your settlers get on with all that baby making and ditch digging, use one simple warrior to scout as far and as fast as possible in the search for those huts which contain hidden goodies. In most cases this action will gain you additional tribes who can move even further and faster to aid you in the quest for early advances.

Irrigate, build roads and establish trade routes between your own cities and those of your neighbours. Trading with other nations is

rewarded with big bucks, and even if you go to war with your partner you'll find that your caravan trade continues. Apparently the game designers subscribe to the slogan, "War, Schmar, Business is Business!".

Apart from a meagre handful of annoying small tribes, the computer-generated civilisations will tend to avoid direct confrontation with you in the early stages, so don't bother trying for an early strike on the guy next door as there'll be time enough for that later. If you find that your land mass has obvious links to other civilisations, then position and fortify your troops in this area to seal yourself in. Little local difficulties at home are usually just weak uprisings which can be dealt with by a few troops.

In the early years, you will flourish in a despotic society as people work hard and don't bother asking for CD players. However, do get yourself into a monarchy as soon as you possibly can to take advantage of the extra production which comes with regal rule.



Investing for the future

As in the real world money brings power, so by spreading your empire, setting up trade routes and thus filling your coffers with gold as early as you can, you'll find that options become easier later on. Should you realise that the opposition is about to develop or create something that you are also pursuing, remember that you can buy your way forward with cash quicker than they can develop it. With money you can put production on overtime to gain an early technological advance, and then use that to gain even more ground. Think of the extra production a factory can churn out in a few turns if you're able to get on-line early.

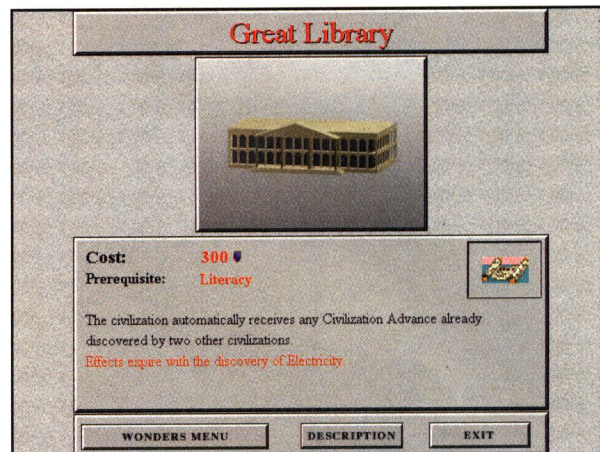
There is, however, an important 'feature' in the game which you must be aware of. If you buy an improvement before you even have one production shield in the kitty, then the cost is DOUBLE the normal price. If for some reason you feel you simply MUST have an improvement by the end of the current turn, then here's a cunning wheeze:

buy some cheaper improvement which you don't need (it will still cost double), and then before you are given the improvement, use the 'Change' button to nominate the improvement you really want and buy that instead. The smaller number of shields which you bought at the double rate will enable you to upgrade to your preferred improvement at a cheaper cost.

Wonders of the world

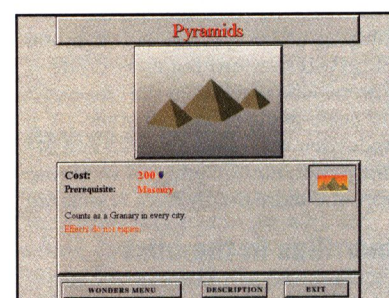
Building wonders is obviously very important and every player has their own favourite. Each individual wonder will have something going for it, but some are arguably better than others. As with all growing organisms, getting a good start in life tends to perpetuate itself into a strong body, and the Pyramids is the wonder which 'just keeps on giving'. With this wonder you will halve the time for citizen production, and your tribe's birth rate will just keep outpacing everyone else's.

If you decide that your best strategy is to keep your head down in the early



(Left) In the early years, try and seal off any obvious routes into your kingdom with a few fortified troops. It will also ensure that sneaky diplomats can't slip through and cause havoc behind the lines.

(Above and right) WOW! There's nothing as wonderful as those Wonders of the World. Get these three wonders into your backyard and you'll have the foundation for an empire that will last a thousand years.



years, emerging later when you have outstripped the others in science and technology, then The Great Wall is the wonder which will keep the marauding hordes from your door. Computer-controlled civilisations tend to avoid confrontation if The Great Wall bounds your cities, and again this will save you diverting funds away from research.

The Great Library is another wonder with its own circle of admirers, but interestingly it can be admired more for what it prevents others from doing than for what it actually gives to its owner. If you're trying to outstrip the competition by moving forward as quickly as possible, then you must prevent other players from getting their hands on your knowledge via their ownership of the Library. You might not need to learn others' secrets, but you damn well don't want them to have the power to steal yours!

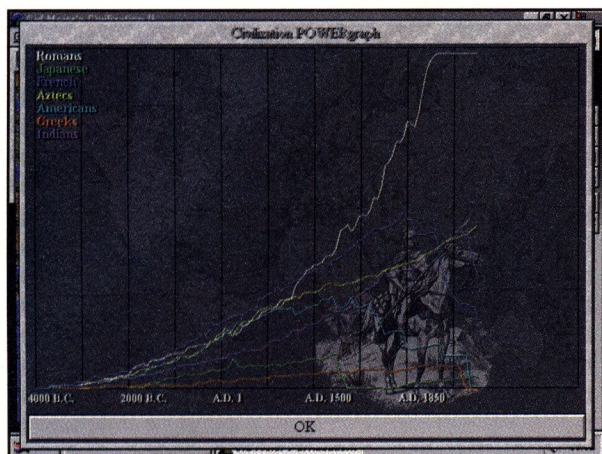
War!

Napoleon's quote that "Armies march on their stomachs" sounds smarter than "Armies march on roads", but in this case it means the same thing. You need a good infrastructure to move supplies and armaments from the area of production to the battleground.

When you attack you must fall on the enemy like a thunderbolt and overwhelm him in a short space of time. Before taking a city be sure you can hold it, and subsequently use it to rest and rebuild your troops. If, however, your intelligence shows that the city is powerfully defended, then don't waste your troops by attacking the fortifications, simply position yourself in the surrounding fields and dig in. Once you have fortified yourself in his

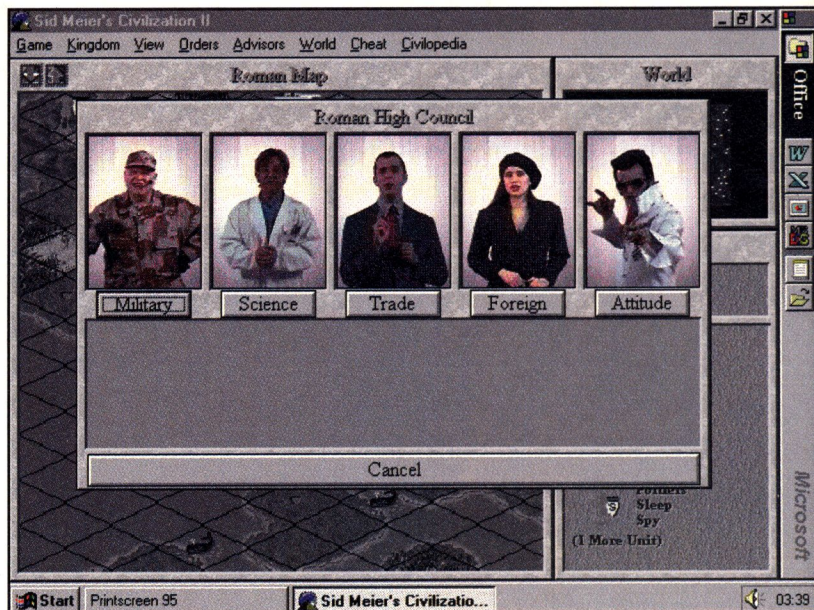


(Left) Take a look at the rate of production which can be achieved once you equip your cities with factories and a hydro-electric plant. With this kind of turnout you can go full bore for the Apollo Program, and eventually the stars.



(Above) Try the Retire option and you'll be given a view of the Power Graph which shows how you're doing and provides an indication of who your most powerful competitors are.

(Above right) The High Council are about as useful as Maggie Thatcher's Cabinet. Ignore them, 'cos they talk a load of bollocks. They'll soon shut up when you start laying a bit of stick around and other nations get to know who's boss.



friends will endlessly ask for a lick of your lollipop, and while you must occasionally give in to this, you should resist it whenever possible. If you are forced to trade secrets, offer those which won't help the opposition build a wonder that you're already building.

Use your friendship to glean inside knowledge of your rival's position, and always be ready to strike at his weakest point. An overwhelming attack on his least defended outpost will almost certainly gain you important technology secrets, and you can always say sorry afterwards. The computer-controlled opposition is always ready to believe that you'll mend your ways and will offer you another chance when you want to kiss and make up. Again and again you can behave like a spoilt brat with a limp-wristed probation officer without suffering true retribution. Years later, when you are Master of the World, you may feel some remorse about the way you behaved, but at least you can console yourself by strolling down the bank to count your gold.

Home rule

Establishing a tolerant democracy for yourself holds lots of benefits such as increased production and less corruption, but it does cramp your style. It can be galling to manoeuvre an army across the globe and position it outside the opposition's front door, only to find that your own government prevents you from attacking. The answer here is to declare a revolution and take up your old despotism ways – after all, it's the winners who write the history books and they'll forgive and forget when you eventually bring home the bacon. Experienced players do, however, place great emphasis on gaining the innocuous sounding Woman's Suffrage development, as it's a BIG help in a democracy. Having this wonder enables the men to go off to war while the women continue to work in the factories without missing their home comforts.

Fundamentalism seems a silly thing to get into, but if you use it in the later stages when you have already made lots of scientific advances it can make

Guerrillas in the mist

Guerrillas and partisans can be a real pain in the butt, but there is a cure for this annoying complaint. When a city containing partisans is taken, these troops will appear like weeds around your newly-won prize and bog you down for ages. Their Achilles heel is that they can only flourish in those empty land squares within a city's zone of control. You can either fill up those squares with your own troops before taking the city, or at least control which squares they do appear in and prepare some horrible surprise to await them.

Britannia rules the waves

Ruling the sea is just as important as ruling the land. Players are encouraged to build their capital cities with a sea view, as in theory this gives them access to all of the bounties that harbours and off-shore production can bring. Of course, this action will also ensure that you are able to bring a battle fleet up to their front door. A heavy naval barrage tends to knock ten bells out of a city's defences in double quick time. Ships move further than land forces in the early stages of the game, and should you decide to go for an early knockout on an opponent who snatched an important wonder and installed it in a beach house, then your turning up one morning with a couple of battle-ships could ruin his whole day.

Foreign policy

The first rule of survival is "Never give a sucker an even break". Let's face it, it's going to be interesting to see just how long the meek manage to keep the earth once they inherit it. Experience shows that only the weak benefit from long-term alliances. By all means make peace with the big guy next door, but only for as long as you have to. Powerful

(Right) Some might say that as a despotic society Perth hasn't changed all that much, and indeed, who are we to argue?





for a powerful strategy. With this form of rule you can fight a very effective war against all the other governments and steal their technology. Fanatic armies aided by fast railways can overwhelm democracies because of the rate at which they can produce armaments. Once you have reduced the opposition to a manageable size, you can sell off your defensive structures and use the cash to dispense bread and circuses. This will cheer up the proletariat on your inevitable return to the democracy, and this is important because you'll need it to get into the space race.

Know your enemy

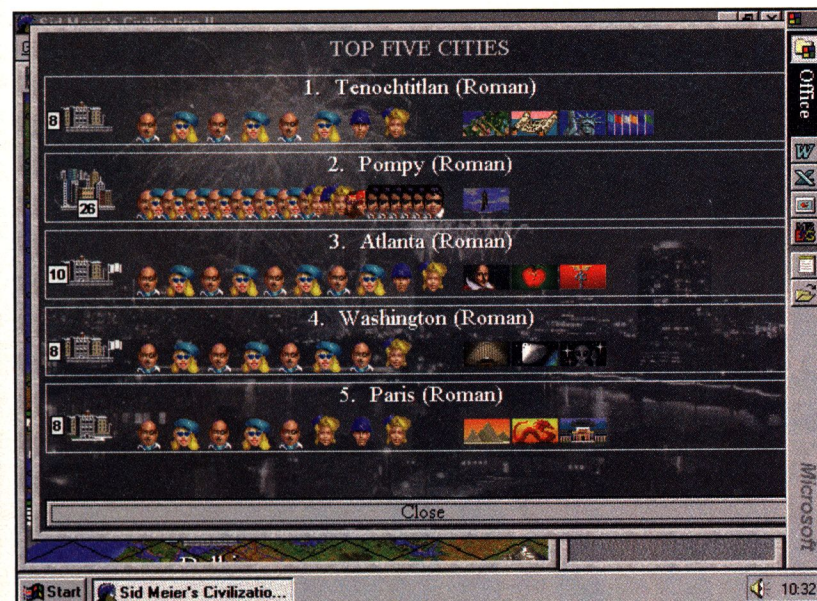
It is a truism that "Diplomacy is war carried on by other means". It's essential that you exchange diplomats with your opponents as this will enable you to examine the opposition's cities, find out how powerfully they are defended, and locate the sites of any wonders. You may be a peace-loving democracy, but should you decide that it's in your interest to take a big leap forward by

acquiring a wonder without paying for it, then you'll want to know where to strike. You can also spot most of the big wonders by selecting the 'Top 5 Cities' option and seeing what's built there.

The trick is to nick

The second oldest profession is that of the Spy. Diplomats and Spies are two of the more powerful pieces on the board, and when used wisely they can save you stacks of time and money. When you consider how long it takes to acquire certain technology, it's obvious that it can be much more profitable to simply send in one of these unscrupulous characters to steal the work of others. Of course, there's a good chance that you'll suffer retribution, but if you're secure behind walls and cold steel it's usually worth the risk.

Be aware that it's as easy to lose knowledge as it is to gain it. One particularly sickening way for the stinger to get stung is by seizing an enemy city which you do not have the strength to retain. Should the enemy



(Above) With a high-speed Antarctic railway you can organise the production of tanks straight out of the factory and onto the battlefield in a far-off continent before you can say, "Brrrrrrrrr!"

(Above left) You're far from home, you've got a battleship plus a conveyor with a few troops onboard, so why not take over a lightly defended city? Think again. It could cost a lot more than a few troops when the surrounding cities retaliate.

(Below left) The Top 5 Cities chart identifies both the state of play and shows where the Wonders are located.

(Below) Fast-track railways are worth the investment as they bump up your trading figures and provide your troops with speedy access to troublespots.

counter-attack and regain the city, you'll find that they will also grab a piece of your technology. A moment's greed on your part could be a costly mistake.

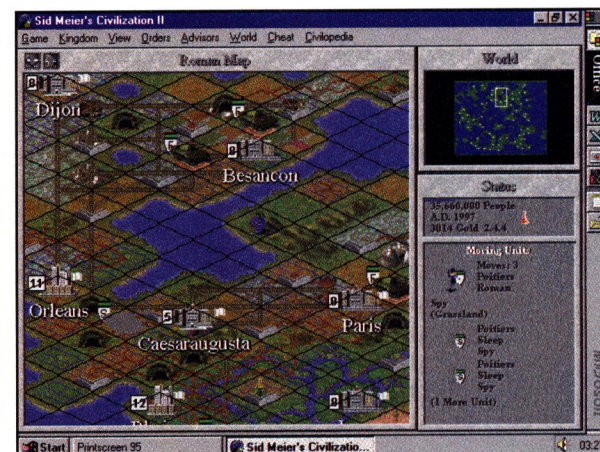
Railroads in the sky

The speed by which you can move goods and troops around the map can mean the difference between winning and losing. Continents tend to be awkward shapes bisected by frustrating blobs of water which slow everything down. However, there are two straight and uninterrupted strips of polar ice which straddle your world, and these are custom-made to take high-speed railway lines. It's a cunning strategy to construct a railway track around the polar strip with suitable junction points down into strategic continents. Place factory cities near the junctions and you will be able to construct and transport men and goods at high speed around the world. Make sure you construct your on/off ramps on the glacier squares so that your freight doesn't take a full turn just getting on and off.

Decision time

So how are you going to play it? Are you going to take your mother's advice and study, work hard, and get your reward in heaven? Or are you going to lie, cheat and steal so you can end up on the Queen's Birthday Honours List?

Heed the Troubleshooter's motto: "Go for it. For when you die, the bastard with the most money wins!" Z



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BUYERS' GUIDE

Welcome to the all-singing, all-dancing **PC Zone Buyers Guide**, which is to gaming what the BR timetable is to trainspotters. You name it, it's here – painstakingly compiled by our very own engine driver.

Issue 16 – July 1994

Castles II

(65) Interplay – Strategy £49.95
Interplay usually releases excellent games – this isn't one of them.

Comanche (CD)

(90: Classic) Optima – Flight Simulation £49.99

Brilliant action-packed helicopter simulation at a great price on cd.

Companions Of Xanth (CD)

(84: Recommended) Accolade – Role-Playing Game £39.99

Great game on disk. Even better on cd.

Corridor 7

(55) Gametek – Arcade £19.99
Nothing new or exciting.

Detroit

(85: Recommended) Impressions – Strategy Game £39.99

An intriguing strategy/sim which boasts both originality and playability.

Dragon's Lair

(67) Elite Systems – Adventure £39.99

An interactive cartoon that's more 'cartoon' than 'interactive'.

Eye Of The Storm

(40) Rebellion – Space/Strategy £39.99

Very futuristic, very *Elite* and very, very crap.

Great Naval Battles 2

(86: Recommended) US Gold – Simulation £45.99

SSI cruises easily to the head of the fleet with this simply stunning sim.

Hand Of Fate (CD)

(78) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £49.99

Good game, shame about the conversion. In this case, more equals less.

Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition

(85: Recommended) Accolade – Sport £19.99

A good golf game at an amazing price.

Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker

(80: Recommended) Hit Squad – Sport £14.99

Dangerously addictive snooker sim.

Lucky's Casino Adventure

(60) Mirage – Card Game £44.99

Challenging, fun, totally addictive but a bit pricey.

Lure Of The Temples

(55) Hit Squad – Adventure £14.99

Old and fading.

Power Game 2 (CD)

(70) Activision – Simulation £29.99

Worth looking at if you don't have the hardware to run the latest sim.

Robinson's Requiem

(85: Recommended) Daze Marketing – RPG £39.99

Highly original, addictive 'survival sim' which, unfortunately, also has some annoying bits.

Sam And Max Hit The Road

(93: Classic) US Gold – Adventure £45.99

Brilliantly original, a highly humorous jaunt.

Sim City Classic

(70) Hit Squad – Strategy £16.99

Still a great game but make sure you check out *Sim City 2000* first.

Sim City Enhanced

(82: Recommended) Interplay – Strategy £49.99

Sim City's an excellent game but so quid is a bit steep for a few enhancements.

Sleepwalker

(45) Hit Squad – Platform Game £9.99

Disappointing third-rate platformer. Stay well away from it.

Space Hulk

(87: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Strategy £39.99

Still a tremendous game, but not as good as the disk-based version.

Summer Challenge & Winter Challenge

(80: Recommended) Accolade – Sport £19.99

Good compilation, great value.

The Horde

(87: Recommended) US Gold – Strategy/Arcade Game £44.99

Not an original concept but extremely well implemented.

The Rock 'n' Roll Years – The '50s

(70) Supervision – General Interest £24.99

Handy for 50's music lovers or as a reference – but we doubt if it'll get you rockin' round the clock.

The Settlers

(89: Recommended) Blue Byte – Strategy £39.99

A damn fine, engrossing game.

Theatre Of War

(70) Hit Squad – Strategy £12.99

Excellent strategy game and it looks cool, too.

UFO

(93: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

Our Chris's favourite, this is an incredibly addictive strategy game.

Wembley Rugby League

(66) Audiogenic – Sport £29.99

This manages to be quite an improvement on previous rugby games.

Wolfpack

(60) Optima – Strategy £29.99

Disappointingly average.

World Cup Challenge

(48) Winsport – Sport £29.95

Disappointing, absurdly RAM-hungry and limited in its playing life.

Issue 17 – August 1994

1942: Pacific Air War

(89: Recommended) MicroProse – Flight Sim £44.99

Two great games – *Carrier Battles* and *Task Force 1942* – in one package. It's a winner!

AI Quarium: The Golem's Curse

(40) US Gold/SSI – Role-Playing Game £35.99

The thinking amoeba's beat 'em up.

Burntime

(43) Max Design – Strategy £39.99

Hey, it's just like being there.

Cool Spot

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Platform Game £29.99

Charm and accessibility save it from being strictly seventies-up!

Delta V

(64) Bethesda Softworks – Shoot 'Em Up £45.99

Very fast and pretty stunning to look at, but it won't keep you up into the night.

Dinosaur Detective Agency

(42) Alternative Software – Platform Game £16.99

Cheap – but that's no reason to be cheerful.

Empire Soccer

(57) Empire – Sport £29.99

Let down by small viewing area, unintelligent player reactions and poor scrolling.

Good To Firm

(50) New Era Software – Sport £29.99

Horse-racing fanatics might get something out of it, but the experience will pall.

International Tennis Open

(88: Recommended) Philips Interactive Media – Sport £44.99

Definitely the new number one seed in the field of PC tennis simulations.

Jack Nicklaus (CD)

(78) Accolade – Sport £16.99

A perfectly serviceable golf game with a good course editor tacked on. Wait for me while I put my golfing shoes on...

Newsweek 3 Globocop (CD)

(0) Mindscape – General Interest £39.99

The most expensive beer mat in the world.

Overlord

(85: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Simulation £39.99

An old idea made new with some interesting tweaks.

Pinball Dreams 2

(70) 21st Century Entertainment – Pinball £19.99

Not bad at all. There's plenty for pinball wizards to get their flippers into.

Shanghai II: Dragon's Eye

(88: Recommended) Activision – Puzzle Game £29.99

Puzzles galore in this excellent addition to the rather mediocre range of games currently available for Windows.

Sherlock Holmes – The Case Of The Serrated Scalpel

(48) Electronic Arts – Adventure £49.99

Elementary, my dear Watson... and that's the problem.

Simon The Sorcerer (CD)

(89: Recommended) Adventuresoft UK Ltd – Adventure £44.99

A tricky adventure jaunt boosted by excellent talkie bits.

Syndicate (CD)

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts – Strategy £39.99

What a game. What a barg.

Tactical Manager

(75) Black Legend – Sport £34.99

An interesting little number with the odd weakness, but several nice ideas.

Theme Park

(93: Classic) Electronic Arts – Strategy £44.99

A highly inventive 'business' sim that's fun, fun, fun. Hip hip hoorah for Bullfrog!

Walls Of Rome

(74) Digital Integration – Strategy £16.99

Good, if thin, fun.

World Cup USA '94

(78) US Gold – Sport £32.99

Good features; difference of opinion over the gameplay.

Zool 2

(82: Recommended) Millennium – Platform £34.99

As they say, if you liked Zool, you'll love this.

Issue 18 – September 1994

Beneath A Steel Sky (CD)

(72) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £39.99

Comic book-style adventure with excellently funny dialogue but lacking any real depth.

D-Day

(40) Impressions – Wargame £39.99

A sluggish, unrealistic and bug-ridden attempt at a wargame without many redeeming features.

FIFA International Soccer

(70) Electronic Arts – Sport £39.99

Looks and sounds great, but lacks gameplay.

Harpoon II

(70) Electronic Arts – Simulation £44.99

Massive, embarrassingly serious sim. Superb detail, occasionally nail-biting, always soooooo.

Inherit The Earth – Quest For The Orb

(72) US Gold – Adventure £39.99

A well-thought out gentle little brain-teaser for those who fancy a 'sensible' game.

International Sensible Soccer

(78) Renegade – Sport £19.99

One of the best on the PC, but still not up to the Amiga version.

Liti Devil (CD)

(88: Recommended) Gremlin Graphics – Adventure £34.99

Excellent, original and addictive.

Metal And Lace: The Battle Of The Robo Babes

(35) Megatech – Beat 'Em Up £39.99

Totally devoid of any entertainment value whatsoever.

On The Ball

(68) Ascon – Sport £34.99

Too many frills, not enough body.

Outpost

(84: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Strategy £49.99

A superb game. Addictive if you've got the hardware, hell if you haven't.

Shadow Of The Comet (CD)

(88: Recommended) Infogrames – Adventure £39.99

A worthwhile reworking of a great game, but still very idiosyncratic.

Soccer Kid

(30) Krisalis – Platform Game £29.99

If you want happening platform action, then buy something else.

Theatre Of Death

(35) Psygnosis – Arcade/Strategy £34.99

Below average imitation of an above-average game.

TIE Fighter

(94: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Space Sim £49.99

Sheer, undiluted quality. Go out and treat yourself to a copy.

Issue 19 – October 1994

Wargame Construction Set 2: Tanks!

(90: Classic) SSI – Wargame £39.99

Never mind the 50-ton tanks – this is 50-tons of solid, fire-belching wargame. Absolutely brilliant.

Battle Bugs

(65) Dynamix – Strategy ETBA

A battle game with bugs in it (as opposed to a bugged battle game).

Dark Legions

(85: Recommended) SSI – Strategy £35.99

Wonderfully entertaining animations and game screens with hidden strategic depths.

Heimdall 2

(45) Core – Adventure £39.99

Great game, shame you can't play it.

Hell Cab

(50) Time Warner – Adventure £49.99

It's the same old story. Great graphics, but sadly lacking in gameplay.

IndyCar Racing Expansion Pack

(94: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Driving £17.99

These tracks are better than the original tracks (if you pretend Phoenix doesn't exist).

Ishar III: The Seven Gates Of Infinity

(50) Simarils – Strategy £39.99

Sum up *Ishar III* in one word? Avoid. Simple as that. The worst of a bunch.

KGB

(65) Hit Squad – Adventure £14.99

Bargain? Maybe. Boring? Definitely.

Kick Off 3

(55) Anco – Sport £29.99

Nice features, but gameplay isn't up to much.

Manchester United Premier League Champions

(60) Krisalis – Sport £29.99

Sensi revisited (although not as good) with a lot of features thrown in.

Planet Football

(68) Infogrames – Sport £39.99

The World Cup produced a rash of rush releases. This is not one of the best.

Police Quest IV – Open Season

(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £44.99

Atmospheric and very entertaining. A bit of a let down at the end, though.

Summer Challenge

(73) Hit Squad – Sport £12.99

Not a bad game by sports sim standards and easy to cheat at, but do you really want another sport sim?

Under A Killing Moon (CD)

US Gold – Adventure £59.99

Pigs can fly. Interactive movies do exist. Sort of.

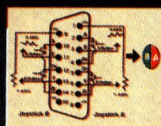
AlfaTwin

The auto-switch & two-player switch for IBM PC joysticks

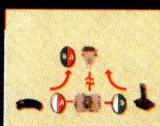
BEST BUY

"Best Buy" award in UK
CD ROM Today magazine
June Issue 1995

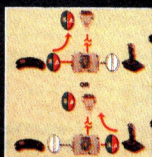
**Utility
model**



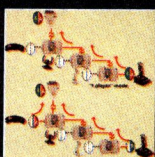
Due to the design of the game port, the IBM PC supports two joysticks (A & B) Each with two fire buttons only. Four button joysticks, and joysticks which have throttle and rudder control or coolie caps, make use of the second joystick (B) controls.



At „two players mode“, both joysticks can be activated at the same time for two-player games. However the advanced functions of the joysticks are not supported.



At „one player mode“ the AlfaTwin allows you to switch between two joysticks, with all the functions supported, by simply pressing the fire button of the joystick you wish to use.



You can cascade up to three AlfaTwins with four different joysticks for your free selection. Moreover, the six feet long cable brings the AlfaTwin round to the front of your desk, freeing you from the hassle of plugging/unplugging your joystick from the back of the computer.



AlfaCommander Pro



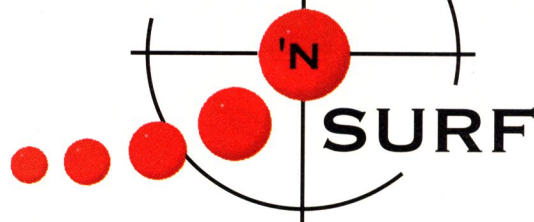
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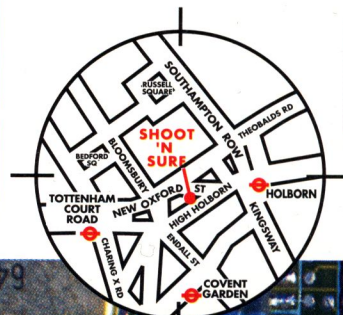
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(Left) *X-Wing*: groove on down to the old 'destroy the Death Star, save the croissant-haired princess' tune.

Wing Commander: Armada

(76) Electronic Arts - Flight Sim £44.99
Lots of good ideas stuck together but somehow it doesn't hang quite right.

Issue 20 - November 1994

Alien Legacy

(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line - Strategy £39.99
Space strategy thing which is a bit like *Outpost* without the pretty bits. Daunting at first, but ultimately very rewarding.

Chaos Engine

(80: Recommended) Renegade - Arcade £32.99
A damned good, multi-direction scrolling, shooty thing with lots of big guns and silly characters.

Colonization

(90: Classic) MicroProse - Strategy £44.99
Try to imagine *Civilization* with more depth and better graphics. Well done... you've just imagined *Colonization*.

Cyberman (CD)

(83: Recommended) Accolade - Arcade Game £39.99

Extremely competent *Road Rash* 3D0 rip-off with lovely digitised backdrops and big motorbikes.

Desert Strike

(78) Gremlin - Arcade £34.99

Conversion of the Mega Drive classic, isometric helicopter, blast 'em up game. The graphics are a bit crap but it's immensely playable.

Doom II

(90: Classic) Virgin Interactive - Arcade Game £49.99
The sequel to one of the best games ever. New graphics, a new gun and brand new monster-wonies. Miss it at your peril.

Inferno (CD)

(88: Recommended) Ocean - Space/Sim £44.99
Eagerly awaited game from DID. Lots of big space ships and silly looking aliens. One of the better space combat games.

KA-50 Hokum

(85: Recommended) Virgin - Simulation £39.99
Without a doubt the very best helicopter sim money can buy. Something for the propeller heads (yes, we know you're out there)...

NHL Hockey 95 (CD)

(91: Classic) EA - Sports/Arcade £34.99
A new version of the top-down scrolly, ice hockey game. Basically the same as the original (reviewed issue seven) but with new stats.

PGA 486 (CD)

(91: Classic) Electronic Arts - Sports £44.99
Gorgeous looking, solid playing, tasty little golf game. One of the best on the PC so far.

Pinball Dreams CD

(70) 21st Century - Arcade £39.99
Right wonderfully designed, smoothly scrolling pinball tables. Why's it on CD? Because here are lots of pointless rendered bits, that's why.

System Shock

(95: Classic) EA/Origin - Role-Playing Game £44.99
Pant-wettingly fantastic, cyberpunk, RPG thing. All hail *System Shock*, that shalt be king hereafter (at least until *System Shock II* comes out, that is).

Issue 21 - December 1994

Alone in the Dark 2 CD

(93: Classic) Infogrames - Adventure £44.99
A sequel that is noticeably better than the original and comes with some serious CD enhancements. What a refreshing change.

Dawn Patrol

(80: Recommended) Empire - Flight Sim £44.99
A gorgeous looking svga ww1 flight sim with a bit of a different idea behind it... it's an interactive book, apparently.

Dreamweb

(74) Empire - Role-Playing Game £44.99
Cyberpunk RPG with lots of violence and a shagging scene that has now become infamous.

Ecstasica

(93: Classic) Psygnosis - Adventure £44.99
An utterly brilliant *Alone in the Dark*-like with ellipsoid-generated characters and lots of pert buttocks.

FIFA CD

(76) Electronic Arts - Sports £39.99
A smart-looking footy game that just falls short of being an absolute belter.

Little Big Adventure

(93: Classic) Electronic Arts - Adventure Game £44.99

A truly amazing adventure with pretty graphics and weird French gameplay. Gobsmaacking.

Magic Carpet

(96: Classic) Electronic Arts - Shoot 'Em Up £44.99
Bloody excellent shoot 'em up - looks brilliant, totally addictive. A must-have.

Project X

(76) Team 17 - Shoot 'Em Up £19.99
A very competent and nicely low-priced little shoot 'em up.

Rise Of The Robots

(88: Recommended) Mirage - Beat 'Em Up £44.99
Possibly the best beat 'em up on the PC so far with some excellent rendered sprites.

Space Simulator

(75) Microsoft - Simulator £39.99
A huge simulation of man's quest for space that is just a little too ambitious for its own good.

Star Crusader

(60) Gametek - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
Basically this is a poor man's *Wing Commander* with some nice CD bits.

Transport Tycoon

(94: Classic) MicroProse - Strategy £44.99
One of the best strategy games around and a more than worthy sequel to *Railroad Tycoon*.

Total Carnage

(74) ICE - Shoot 'Em Up £27.99
Good challenging fun and a more than competent conversion of the original arcade machine.

Issue 22 - January 1995

Acres Of The Deep

(90: Classic) Dynamix/Sierra - Naval Sim £39.99
Graphics, gameplay, sound and atmosphere combine to make this the best sub game available.

All New World Of Lemmings

(78) Digital Integration - Puzzle Game £39.99
If you like all the other *Lemmings* games, you'll like this one, too.

Armored Fist (CD)

(86: Recommended) US Gold/Novologic - Simulation £44.99

Comanche on wheels. Er, tracks. You know what we mean.

Creature Shock

(78) Virgin - Adventure Game £49.99
An engrossing, atmospheric 3D adventure game. Great graphics, absorbing levels, but lousy soundtrack.

Cyberwar

(55) SCI - Arcade Adventure £49.99
It looks amazing. The gameplay isn't.

Dark Sun II

(80: Recommended) Mindscape - RPG £44.99
Love it for its brains, not for its looks.

Discworld

(96: Classic) Psygnosis - Adventure Game £49.99
Discworld is possibly the best point-and-click adventure game ever made.

Front Page Sports Baseball

(85: Recommended) Sierra - Sport £44.99
It takes all the best bits from all the best games and ends up being the best.

Klick 'N' Play

(88: Recommended) Europress - Game Designer for Windows £39.99

Neat intuitive, and loads of fun.

Novastorm

(40) Psygnosis - Shoot 'Em Up £44.99
Repeat ad nauseam: 'Pretty graphics doth not a game make.'

Power Drive

(50) US Gold - Racing Game £39.99
Knock off 30 whole points for no two-player mode. Sod off *Power Drive*.

Quarantine

(80: Recommended) Gametek - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

An excellent blast and it looks good, too.

Retribution

(45) Gremlin Interactive - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
Not only is it a below average shoot 'em up, it has pretensions too.

US Navy Fighters

(90: Classic) Electronic Arts - Flight Sim £44.99
If it had a multi-player facility, we would've given it 100. But it hasn't, so we won't.

Warcraft

(75) Interplay - Strategy £39.99
Good, simple, addictive strategy game.

Issue 23 - February 1995

Alone in the Dark 3

(95: Classic) Infogrames - Adventure £44.99
The mega-stonkingly weird and wonderful final chapter in the *Alone In The Dark* trilogy.

Cannon Fodder 2

(74) Virgin Interactive - Arcade/Strategy £34.99
Just more of the same, or is *Cannon Fodder 2* a significant improvement? Sensible returns with more 'fun with a gun'.

Commander Blood

(81: Recommended) Mindscape - Adventure Game £44.99

It's French, and guess what? It's weird. Very weird. We try not to get at them for it... but this is just plain mad.

Cyberia

(80: Recommended) Interplay - Adventure/Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

A contender for the 'Best-looking game of 1994' award. Tastier than treacle pudding with lashings of thick custard, and almost certainly better than *Rebel Assault*.

Dragon Lore

(81: Recommended) Mindscape - Adventure £44.99
Cryo's epic multi-CD graphic adventure finally arrives. Is it just more French weirdness or is it actually a decent game?

Hammer Of The Gods

(77) US Gold - Strategy £TBA
Nordic domination and general Euro-bashing in this simple but addictive strategy war sim from New World Computing.

Kyrandia 3

(87: Recommended) Virgin - Adventure £44.99
Westwood's *Fables and Fiends* series makes it to number three, and this time you get to play the bad guy!

Lion King

(71) Virgin - Platform Game £29.99

The smash-hit movie turns into a reasonable platform game. *PC Zone* good tip number one - just pretend your PC is a Mega Drive.

NASCAR Racing

(84: Recommended) Virgin - Racing Sim £44.99
Papyrus follows up *IndyCar* with the popular American sport of driving round in circles.

Noctropolis

(79) Electronic Arts - Adventure £44.99
For a change EA goes all weird, gothic and horrific in this unusual super-hero adventure.

Ultimate Body Blows

(78) Team 17 - Beat 'Em Up £29.99

An Amiga conversion from Team 17. But don't be put off by that - it's actually quite good.

Voyeur

(40) Interplay - Adventure £39.99
Not as pervy as you might think. Yes, there are suspenders and brassieres in it, but don't buy it hoping for nudity or naughtiness 'cos you won't find any (er well, not much, at least not enough to satisfy the male staff on *PC Zone*).

Wing Commander III

(62) Electronic Arts - Flight Simulation £59.99
Four million dollars, Luke Skywalker and a well-known porn actress - a potentially interesting situation, if ever there was one.

Issue 24 - March 1995

Aladdin

(70) Virgin - Arcade £29.99

He leaps tall buildings, cuts through baddies with his scimitar and wears pointy slippers. He's Aladdin - who else?

Dark Forces

(95: Classic) LucasArts/Virgin - Action Adventure £54.99

The empire is finally *Doom*-ed, but is it better

than the real thing? We bring you the first review of the game everyone's itching to get their hands on, in a special world exclusive, courtesy of LucasArts and Virgin.

Doom Clones: Head To Head

(55) Merit - Action Adventure £39.99
We put Merit's *Dr Radiaki* up against Elite's *Virtuoso* and run for cover (well, *Doom*, actually).

Hell: A Cyberpunk Thriller

(25) Gametek - Adventure £39.99
It is: it isn't. If it's really this bad then start praying for forgiveness immediately.

Kick Off 3: European Challenge

(70) Anco - Sport £29.99
The last *Kick Off* was an absolute nightmare. Has Anco finally got it together in Europe?

King's Quest VII

(93: Classic) Sierra - Adventure £44.99
The latest point-and-click extravaganza from the Roberta Williams' school of mush-wushy, cutesy-wutesyness.

Knights Of Xentar

(10) Megatech - Adventure £49.99
A plentiful lack of beat 'em up action strides onto the PC, courtesy of Megatech. Ouch!

Menzoberanzan

(68) Mindscape - Role-Playing Game £TBA
Not a tasty lozenge that promises to clear your stuffy nose and soothe your sore throat, but a rather ordinary role-playing game.

Metaltech: Earthsiege

(87: Recommended) Sierra - Simulation £39.99
Go stomping mad in this spectacular *HERC*-fest. Just one thing though, why have extravagant *HERCS* that walk when the terrain is flat?

Realms Of Arkania: Star Trail

(85: Recommended) US Gold - Role-Playing Game £44.99

The sequel to the keenly received *Blade Of Destiny* finally makes it onto CD-ROM. Hip, hip...

SuperKarts

(82: Recommended) Virgin - Action £TBA
The most fun you can have with your bum an inch off the ground, when wearing a crash helmet and clad in brightly-coloured leather.

TIE Fighter: Defender Of The Empire

(73) LucasArts - Space/Action £19.99
Two new missions and a new ship. What ever will they think of next?

Wings Of Glory

(78) Electronic Arts - Flight Sim £TBA
Chocks away as Origin reach for the skies to do battle with the Hun, chaps with 'taches and every other WWI flight sim ever created.

Issue 25 - April 1995

BC Racers

(62) Core Design - Racing Sim £34.99

Best described as a kind of *Chuck Rock* meets *Super Mario Kart*. Sadly, the clash of these two mega-games hasn't proven to be that good.

Big Red Adventure

(70) Core Design - Adventure £39.99
This is the follow up to *Nippon Safes...* arrgh, keep it away! Hang on a minute, though, *Big Red Adventure* looks like it could be quite good.

Bioforge

(95: Classic) Electronic Arts - Action Adventure £44.99
The first 'real' interactive movie? Or is it just another game that looks like *Alone In The Dark*?

Descent

(94: Classic) Interplay - 3D Shoot 'Em Up £44.99

Could this be the game to finally knock *Doom* off the top spot? The fabulous 3D game from Interplay arrives at last.

Heretic

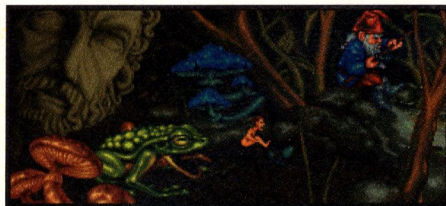
(78) ID/Raven - 3D Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
'Doom-in-tights.' Can a fighting fantasy version of the greatest game of all time, ever, ever, really be better? Er, no.

Iron Assault

(57) Virgin - 3D Shoot 'Em Up £34.99
A distinctly average 'big robot' game joins the ranks of other distinctly average 'big robot' games on the PC.

Legions

(65) Mindscape - Strategy Wargame £34.99
This is definitely one for the Hex-heads, this is. It's intense, ludicrously strategic and it runs under *Windows*. Eek!



(Left) *Simon The Sorcerer*: at last, an adventure game with a sense of humour – albeit a bit Pratchett-esque.

Lost Eden

(76) Virgin – Adventure £34.99
Cryo's dinosaur game finally arrives a year after it was unveiled. It's a bit like *Jurassic Park* meets *Dragon Lore*.

Issue 26 – May 1995

Atari Action Pack

(50) Activision – VCS Atari Compilation £24.99
This compilation includes lots of really ancient Activision Atari VCS games, all for Windows and all on one CD. So what's it like? Well, it's like a time machine that takes you somewhere a bit crap!

Cyclones

(78) Mindscape – Adventure £44.99
Yet another *Doom* clone – but not a bad one by any means – from the team that brought us both *Heretic* and *Shadowcaster*.

Football Glory

(60) Kompart – Sports £TBA
Q: When is *Sensible Soccer* not really *Sensible Soccer*?
A: When it's a not-quite-so-good copy called *Football Glory*.

Gulley

(58) Psygnosis – Adventure £39.99
Sequel-ola. *Gulley* is the follow up to the awful *Innocent Until Caught*, and it's significantly better, but still not brilliant.

Jungle Strike

(79) Gremlin – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
Another sequel... this time, the sequel to *Desert Strike*. But this shoot 'em up is bigger, more varied and harder than the original. Not bad at all.

NBA Live

(90) Classic) Electronic Arts – Sport £44.99
EA Sports awakens from a period of dormancy with this absolutely corking basketball arcade game – the best of its type around.

Renegade

(75) SSI – Space Sim £44.99
SSI's *TIE Fighter/Wing Commander* wannabe in glorious SVGA. A surprisingly playable space warfare game.
Rise Of The Triad
(82: Classic) US Gold and PD Selections – Adventure £39.95
Some love it and some hate it... but of the *Doom*-likes, this is one of the best.

Super Frog

(40) Team 17 – Platform £19.99
A platform game with a frog in it... Uh-huh. Okay.

Tank Commander

(60) Domark – Simulation £39.99
A budget-style tank game at full price. If you've got more money than sense, you'll really love it!

Woodruff and the Schnibble of Azimuth

(75) Sierra – Adventure £39.99
A weird adventure game from Sierra. A wonderfully deceptive adventure with comic-book feel!

X-COM

(94) Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99
The first *X-COM* was absolutely brilliant. This sequel is even better still.

Issue 27 – June 1995

Blind Date

(25) Domark – Adventure £39.99
Chris had a jolly splendid time reviewing last month's 'interactive-try-to-get-laid-simulator'. What will the softies come up with next?

Full Throttle

(92: Classic) LucasArts/Virgin – Adventure £49.99
Hooray for LucasArts adventures. Big, tough guy biker stuff this time. Splendid.

Flight Of The Amazon Queen

(50) Warner Interactive – Adventure £39.99
This tries desperately to be a LucasArts adventure but fails quite miserably. Naff.

Hardball 4

(83: Recommended) Accolade/Warner – Arcade/Sports £39.99
Returning May's theme of 'sequels', Warner Interactive brings us the fourth *Hardball*. Surely Warner have to call it quits now?

High Seas Trader

(62) Impressions – Strategy/Simulation Game £39.99
Affectionately referred to as 'High Street Trader' in the PC Zone office, this is the latest strategy offering from Impressions.

Magic Carpet: Hidden Worlds

(80: Recommended) Bullfrog – Arcade/Strategy £19.99

A sort of add-on thingy for *Magic Carpet* with lots of snow. The trouble is though, it's completely and utterly, stupidly, bloody hard.

PyroTechnica

(69) Psygnosis – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £29.99
A very poor *Descent*-wannabe from Psygnosis. Fortunately though, it's considerably cheaper.

Psycho Pinball

(78) Codemasters – Arcade £44.99
Pinball from Codemasters. Some nice tables. Some nice music. Sorted.

Slipstream 5000

(88: Recommended) Gremlin Interactive – Arcade/Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
Slipstream is a three-dimensional-fabby-whizzo racing/shooting/speedy thing from Gremlin. Splendid stuff, and better than boring, run-of-the-mill racing games.

Star Trek: TNG – "A Final Unity"

(94: Classic) MicroProse – Adventure £49.99
Yes, it may have a ridiculously long title, but this is, without a doubt, the best game to bear the *Star Trek* name so far.

Super Streetfighter II Turbo

(90: Classic) Gametek – Beat 'Em Up £39.99
SSFII Turbo is one of the best arcade conversions ever seen on the PC.

Ticonderoga

(78) Mindscape – Naval/Strategy £44.99
Silly name but a damn fine naval strategy game. Lovely graphics and splendid CD bits.

Virtua Chess

(85: Recommended) Titus – Strategy £44.99
Snazzy 3D SVGA chess thingy from Titus, France. This one's different looking and with a ninja bastard brainbox.

Warriors

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Beat 'Em Up £39.99
What, yet another beat 'em up? Anyone would think there's a shortage of 'em or something.

Issue 28 – July 1995

1830

(68) US Gold – Board Game £39.99
Set in the early years of American colonisation, a sort of *Railroad Tycoon* meets *Risk*. Strictly for those of trainspotter persuasion.

Alex Dampier Pro Hockey

(66) Merit Software – Sports Sim £39.95
Ice hockey sim with *FIFA*-style viewpoint, but impossible control system, and comes no where near *NHL Hockey '95*.

Alien Breed: Tower Assault

(81) Team 17 – Shoot 'Em Up £29.99
The sequel to *Alien Breed*, but superior to the PC version of the original. Great graphics and frenzied, addictive shooty action.

Brett Hull Hockey '95

(73) Accolade/Warner – Sports Simulation £39.99
Top-down ice hockey game, which doesn't match the king of ice hockey sims, *NHL Hockey '95*, but betters *Alex Dampier Pro Hockey '95*.

Chaos Control

(40) Philips/Infogrames – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
Unbelievably terrible futuristic FMV shoot 'em up that was passable on CD-i, but should never have seen the light of day on PC.

Command & Conquer

(95: Classic) Virgin – Strategy Adventure £44.99
Dune 2 meets *Cannon Fodder* in this brilliant game of soldiers. It's without doubt one of the best of its genre around right now.

Daedalus Encounter

(58) Virgin – Adventure £44.95
Interactive movie game that fails to make the grade – and, for what it's worth, stars Tia Carrere, the babe from *Wayne's World*.

Dominus

(42) US Gold – Strategy Game £39.99
Fantasy battle game with good graphics and comprehensive interface but lacking that vital ingredient – gameplay.

Frontier: First Encounters

(78) Gametek – Space Strategy Simulation £39.99

Disappointing enhanced version of *Elite II*, which is also bugged to jiggery.

Jagged Alliance

(72) Mindscape – Strategy Game £39.99
Risk meets *Syndicate* in this strategy battle jaunt. It's not groundbreaking or particularly original but quite good fun all the same.

Loadstar

(35) BMG Interactive – Shoot 'Em Up £34.99
Dreadful FMV shoot 'em up not worth the paper its manual was printed on.

Machiavelli The Prince

(89) MicroProse – Strategy Game £44.99
Colonization-style sim packed with political intrigue, assassinations, plagues, pirates and a unique play by e-mail feature.

Man Utd: The Double

(71) Krisalis – Sports Sim £29.99
The best *Manchester United* game yet, but it's still not a patch on the excellent *Sensible Soccer* of this world.

Sim Tower

(70) Maxis – Strategy Game £39.99
Basically *Sim City* viewed from the side with the emphasis on tower blocks, but not as addictive – and the presentation is dire.

Virtual Pool

(91: Classic) Interplay – Sports Sim £44.99
Superb gameplay and 3D graphics, complete with a multi-player network option. This is about as close to a real game of pool as you can possibly get.

Issue 29 – August 1995

Civil War

(83: Recommended) Empire – Strategy Game £44.99
The sequel to *Fields Of Glory*, and jolly nice it looks too.

FX Fighters

(93: Classic) Philips/GTE – Beat 'Em Up £39.99
The closest thing to *Virtua Fighter* on the PC, and by far the best beat 'em up you can buy. We love it!

Hi-Octane

(83: Recommended) Bullfrog/Electronic Arts – Racing Game £39.99

Bullfrog surprises everyone by releasing a racing game, and surprises everyone even more by not saying anything about it until it's nearly finished. Hmm.

Micro Machines 2

(92: Classic) Codemasters – Racing Game £44.99
A brilliant, simple and effective racing game with a rather nifty little track designer thrown in for good measure.

Orion Conspiracy

(36) Domark – Adventure Game £39.99
Domark unveils what has to be the worst-scripted computer game ever conceived.

Perfect General 2

(82: Recommended) Mirage Software – Strategy Wargame £44.99
Hex-tastic strategy game for those of you who really like your wargames intense.

Picture Perfect Golf

(30) Empire – Sports Sim £44.99
Pretty bloody naff. But hey, if you want to look at nice, digitised pictures of a golf course, this is well worth the dosh.

Prisoner Of Ice

(88: Recommended) Infogrames – Adventure £44.99
The second in the *Chulhu* range – and it's a stonker of a point-and-click adventure.

Scottish Open Golf

(60) Core Design – Sports Sim £39.99
Core Design finally releases its 3D virtual golf thing. There are some okay bits and some pretty nob bits. Unfortunately, it's the nob bits that win through.

Silverload

(7) Millennium/Psygnosis – Adventure Game £39.99
Millennium and Psygnosis team up to produce an adventure which is truly... quite awful.

Striker 95

(62) Time Warner – Sports Sim £34.99
A football game that looks really fab and groovy, but doesn't quite cut it in the gameplay stakes.

Ultimate Doom

(90: Classic) GT Interactive – Shoot 'Em Up £29.99

The original *Doom* re-packaged with an extra episode. Is it another classic or just a colossal rip-off?

Vortex

(80: Recommended) Warner Interactive – Interactive Movie £39.99

It's an interactive movie. No, it's a game. It's an interactive movie. No, it's a game. Arrghh!!!

Issue 30 – September 1995

Across the Rhine

(86: Recommended) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99
If you're a propeller head you'll think it's the dog's gonads. If you're a bit of a thicky, you'll still like it, once you work your way through the laborious manual, that is.

Action Soccer

(50) Ubisoft – Football Sim £34.99
It had potential, but ultimately *Action Soccer* seems to have been relegated to the ranks of 'another crap footie game'.

Air Power

(84: Recommended) Mindscape – Flight Sim £44.99
Rowan teams up with Mindscape and chucks in all the best bits from its other flight sims, to make up a sort of fantasy strategy game, which is really pretty groovy.

AIV Networks

(80: Recommended) Infogrames – Business Sim £44.99
A business sim for people who love trains. (Yee gods! What next?)

Dungeon Master 2

(59) Interplay – Role Playing Game £44.99
It came out late and it wasn't worth the wait. Disappointingly out-dated and old-fashioned.

Last Dynasty

(45) Sierra – Space Combat Sim £44.99
A good *Windows*-based adventure game, which is completely ruined by crap combat sections.

Lords Of Midnight

(60) Domark – Adventure £44.99
Another very old game that's been given the sequel treatment – our reviewer said it was the biggest let-down since that leak in his inflatable Claire Rayner.

Sim Town

(81: Recommended) Maxis – Simulation £29.99
Fun and educational in equal measures. But even better, you can make people say rude things when they're pissed off.

Simon The Sorcerer 2

(84: Recommended) Adventure Soft (UK) – Adventure Game £44.99

Simon returns with DMs and long hair. Even though Chris Barrie hasn't done the voice this time, it's still a bloody good talkie adventure.

Space Quest 6

(70) Sierra – Adventure Game £44.99
Trite adventure completely devoid of humour. *Space Quest* fans will love it!

Terminal Velocity

(80: Recommended) US Gold – Shoot 'Em Up £44.99
Very good 3D engine, wearing a pair of rather unoriginal, unaddictive 'game-play trousers'.

US Marine Fighters

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £19.99
Absolutely brilliant. The only thing that prevented us giving *US Marine Fighters* 100 per cent was the lack of a network facility.

Issue 31 – October 1995

EF2000

(97: Classic) Ocean/DID – Flight Sim £49.99
Something for everyone. The best balance between simulator and game, ever.

Fade To Black

(94: Classic) Electronic Arts – Arcade Adventure £44.99

A corking follow up to *Flashback*, with lots of spinnies-aroundy polygon bits, morphing monsties and big guns.

The Need For Speed

(89: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Racing £44.99

There's no need to buy a 3D0 now this has made it to the PC! This sits somewhere between *Screamer* and the forthcoming *FIGP2*. We love the splendid crashes!

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(Right) *IndyCar Racing*: great graphics and playability make this the best ever driving game.

(Far right) *Sam & Max*: The clue's inside the cat. Rip its head off! (Sick, or what?)



Apache Longbow

(96: Classic) Digital Integration - Sim £39.99
The best helicopter sim around; although *Comanche* looks better, nothing comes close to matching the mixture of spot on handling, tactics, networking and atmosphere.

Buried In Time

(77) US Gold - Interactive Movie £44.99
The sequel to *The Journeyman Project* is a tad too lengthy; technically it's great but it's lacking the elements of truly enjoyable gameplay.

MechWarrior 2

(88: Recommended) Activision - Board Game £49.99

Mayhem! Go on a stomping frenzy encased in a massive armour-plated robot body. Good, hard-hitting fun with plenty of missions and a good difficulty curve.

Blown Away

(19) Instant Access - Interactive Movie £39.99
A pretty crap game of a pretty crap film.

Cyberbykes

(10) Gametek - Shoot 'Em Up £24.99

It came, it saw, it sucked. Ideal as a present for someone you don't like.

Lemmings 3D

(71) Psygnosis - Puzzle Game £39.99

We've seen it all before; all that's new is that it's now from a different angle. Yawn.

Player Manager 2

(45) Anco - Sport £34.99

Visually stunted, it's difficult to control the ball. What else? Oh, it's one to avoid.

Championship Manager 2

(92: Classic) Domark - Sport £44.99 (TBC)

Every other football management game is just that - a game - but this one becomes 'real life'.

Issue 32 - November 1995

Al Unser Jr Racing

(60) Mindscape - Racing Game £29.99

It has all the features you'd expect from a racing game but ultimately it's fun for only a limited time.

Ascendancy

(93: Classic) Virgin - Strategy £39.99

More than just another space-based strategy game, this has got all the best bits of every god/strategy/warfare game available. A word of warning though, get stuck into this and you can say goodbye to your social life.

Battle Beat

(68) 7th Level - Beat 'Em Up £29.99

A cartoon beat 'em up with great animation, cut scenes and special effects - it looks great, but as for gameplay - forget it.

Burn/Cycle

(85: Recommended) Philips - Interactive Adventure £44.99

One of the best interactive adventures we've seen; good pacing, sharp plot and plenty of variety combine to make it outstanding.

Crime Patrol & Gamesun

(70) American Laser Games/Mirage - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

It won't take you long to exhaust the fun factor of *Crime Patrol*, but the gun is compatible with some other games and as a bundled package it's really not bad value.

Darker

(62) Psygnosis - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

Mediocre 3D blast 'em up with nice smooth polygons, lots to shoot at, but not much more.

Fatal Racing

(88: Recommended) Gremlin Interactive - Racing £TBC

Ridge Racer meets *Stunt Car Racer*... as long as you've got a Pentium, of course.

Magic Carpet 2

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts - Shoot 'Em Up £44.99

It sent our reviewer into a frenzy! The classic game is now even better, with new monsters and a new graphical style which includes scary night-time bits - totally addictive.

NHL Hockey 96

(90: Classic) Electronic Arts - Sport £44.99

This uses Electronic Arts' new 'Virtual Stadium' technology (used in *FIFA Soccer* to make it look so flash). One of the nicest-looking sports games we've reviewed for ages.

PGA Tour 96

(94: Classic) Electronic Arts - Sport £44.99

New and improved! Now includes two new Championship courses, you can play as or against 14 actual photo-realistic pros, there's a new picture-in-picture view... need we go on? The best golf game just got better.

Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure

(70) Activision - Platform £44.99

Conversion of the ancient Atari vcs platform game; nothing special but still fairly addictive.

Primal Rage

(82: Recommended) Time Warner Interactive - Beat 'Em Up £39.99

Jurassic Park for psychopaths - yep, dinosaurs a-plenty, good gameplay and graphics. Should appeal to *Mortal Kombat* or *Street Fighter* fans.

Issue 33 - December 1995

Allen Odyssey

(77) Phillips - Space Adventure Game £44.99

A sort of cross between *Bioforge* and *Cyberia*, with the odd *Star Wars* reference thrown in; overall a pretty adventure which plods a bit.

Battle Isle 3: Shadow Of The Emperor

(93: Classic) Blue Byte - Strategy £45.99

The third and possibly final instalment of one of the most highly respected strategy games of all time. Certainly worth checking out.

Comanche Vs Werewolf

(88: Recommended) Novologic/US Gold - Helicopter Flight Sim £39.99

The sequel takes the original game and chucks in a completely new one for good measure. Maybe not the best helicopter flight sim, but there's plenty to recommend it.

Crusader

(91: Classic) Electronic Arts - Blast 'Em Up £49.99

Action, adventure, people getting their heads blown off - bloody excellent.

Destruction Derby

(90: Classic) Sony Interactive - Racing Game £44.99

The PlayStation game where you can smash yourself and others to pieces comes to the PC... Plenty of network options, five different ways to play, superb graphics - need we say more?

FIFA '96

(84: Recommended) Electronic Arts - Sport £44.99

If you already own last year's *FIFA* and you like it, this is worth buying. But if you want a simple and easy-to-control system look elsewhere.

Mortal Kombat 3

(90: Classic) GT Interactive - Beat 'Em Up £44.99

This is the best two-dimensional beat 'em up you'll find anywhere right now. Make damn sure you enjoy it while it lasts.

Navy Strike

(90: Classic) Empire Interactive - Naval Sim £44.99

Two games in one: a flight sim and a military command sim. You pilot a jet fighter - and once the atmosphere kicks in you're hooked.

Phantasmagoria

(50) Sierra - Adventure £49.99

A brave effort (spanning seven CDs!) but the interactive part is a bit ambitious. It looks good but that's about it.

Road Warrior

(61) Gametek - Driving Game £39.99

The sequel to *Quarantine* is nothing to write home about, despite the good graphics.

Scoremiser

(89: Recommended) VIE - Driving Game £29.99

Stunning looking super speedy arcade racer with six different tracks, six different cars (manual or auto) and three different skill levels.

Worms

(84: Recommended) Ocean - Strategy £34.99

A cross between *Lemmings* and *Cannon Fodder*. Four people can play at once, there's lots of weapons and features, and the levels are generated afresh each time you play - good fun.

Witchaven

(88: Recommended) US Gold - Arcade/Role-Playing Game £29.99

Packed with spells and potions, the usual network/modem options, impressive graphical effects - and if you're looking for gore you've found it. Sick, twisted and violent - we like it.

Issue 34 - January 1996

Actua Soccer

(92: Classic) Gremlin Interactive - Sport £TBC

Ranking alongside *Command & Conquer* as the office favourite at the moment, this is currently the best football game on the PC thanks to excellent gameplay and a fantastic 3D polygonised pitch arrangement.

Entomorph

(78) Mindscape - Role-Playing Game £44.99

If you've already got a copy of *Ultima VII* and fancy something similar in style, *Entomorph* is worth a look. It's got a fairly engrossing storyline, although the presentation is somewhat lacklustre.

Fighter Duel

(65) Philips Media - Flight Sim £39.99

There's very little to say about this game as there's actually very little to it - don't expect it to keep you rivetted to the screen; even what little scenery there is dull.

F1 Grand Prix Manager

(85: Recommended) MicroProse - Racing £44.99

One of the most imaginative management simulations around - certainly the best Grand Prix one available, but then it's the only one.

Frankenstein: Through The Eyes Of The Monster

(79) Interplay - Adventure £44.99

Starring Tim Curry, this is an excellent gothic adventure. The puzzles are challenging, the storyline is cleverly structured, the visuals are sumptuous, but sadly it's hampered by a dodgy interface which makes it difficult to navigate your way through the locations.

IndyCar 2

(90: Classic) Papyrus/Virgin - Racing £34.99

Polygontastic with absolutely glorious SVGA graphics. If you already own *IndyCar 1*, hold out for *F1GP2* instead. But if you don't, buy this one. Oh, but if we're really honest here, you ought to try to afford *F1GP2* as well.

Mortal Coil

(50) Vic Tokai/Virgin - Strategic Shoot 'Em Up £34.99

Is this yet another *Doom* clone? It basically involves loads of shooting everything you see from a 3D perspective. A great idea on paper, but it's let down by poor graphics and voiceovers (even with the dubious talents of Dan Behr) - you may well prefer *Hexen*.

Pinball World

(77) 21st Century Entertainment - Pinball £44.99

For some reason there seems to be more pinball and football games coming out than you could possibly want, and although you've got a choice of table layouts (which you don't really need anyway) it doesn't really offer anything markedly different.

Pro Pinball: The Web

(90: Classic) Empire Interactive - Pinball £34.99

Don't discount this game because it only features one table as it's packed with goodies, you can see the table in its entirety or from six different viewpoints, it's realistic (you can nudge the table from either side as well as the bottom), and it's got a totally stonking soundtrack as well.

Rebel Assault II

(90: Classic) LucasArts/VIE - Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

If you can't see what all the fuss about *Star Wars* is about or you didn't like the original *Rebel Assault*, chances are you won't like this. But if you're a die-hard Empire/Rebel fan, you'll love it. Of course solid action, 'real' live action bits, bloody gorgeous graphics and a corking storyline go some way to recommend it as well.

Sensible World Of Soccer

(60) Warner Interactive - Sport £39.99

We waited a long time for this one. It's got some management bits, some nice rendered cut-scenes and commentary, but it's still not a patch on *Actua Soccer*.

Stonekeep

(76) Interplay - Role-Playing Game £44.99

It looks a bit dated (mainly because it's flick-screen), but in its favour it has a nice, easy-to-handle control method, a wide variety of levels to keep you interested and a very thoughtful experience system which allows your character(s) to become more skilled with their weapons the more they use them.

Su27 Flanker

(95: Classic) Mindscape - Flight Simulation £44.99

Developed by Russian pilots, this is all about one of the scariest aircraft ever built. It's no lightweight 'hop in and pole around the sky' type product, but unfortunately it's let down by a lack of network or serial link multi-play facility. If you want a comparison it's better than *EF2000*, *McG29* and *Tornado*.

The Dig

(87: Recommended) LucasArts/VIE - Adventure £44.99

Another offering touched by the hand of Spielberg. It's a proper adventure with a proper story, a cut above your usual sci-fi adventure stuff. And it's got great music.

Tilt

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive - Pinball Game £TBC

You get six tables to choose from (including *Monster*, *Funfair*, *Gangster*, *Sci-Fi*, *Myst* and *Majik*). It doesn't have the depth of the single table in *The Web*, but it's good all the same.

Williams Arcade Classics

(90: Classic) GT Interactive - Various £29.99

Worth buying for an arcade-perfect version of *Defender* alone, this '80s compilation also includes *Robotron 2084*, *StarGate Defender 2*, *Joust*, *Bubbles* and *Sinistar*. The graphics obviously aren't too hot given the age of the titles, but don't hold that against it.

WipeOut

(78) Sony Interactive - Racing £44.99

Winging it way directly from the PlayStation, this game of anti-gravity racing with floating cars seems to have lost something in the conversion; play it on anything other than a Pentium and you can kiss the PC version's smoothness and graphical details goodbye. Top marks for the brilliant soundtrack though.

Issue 35 - February 1996

Battleground Ardennes

(84: Recommended) Empire Interactive - Wargame £40 (TBC)

One for the serious strategy heads among you - hex-wargaming finally gets updated for the '90s. (NB: You'll need Windows 95 to play it.)

Beavis and Butt-head

(87: Recommended) Viacom New Media - Point-and-click Adventure £39.99

Fans of the gruesome twosome will love this game (but avoid it if you're not as it's unlikely to appeal). Plenty of puzzle-solving and a hilarious script - it's like being in control of your very own *Beavis and Butt-head* episode.

Extreme Pinball

(65) Electronic Arts - Pinball Game £39.99

So what did our reviewer make of the 'proper' version of *Epic Pinball*? He had one word for it: "Aaaarrrrrggghh!" If you're after a top quality pinball game, buy *Pro Pinball: The Web* instead.

Quest For Fame

(80: Recommended) IBM - Music Role-Playing Game £49.95

Air guitar rules! Pick up the plastic plectrum and join Aerosmith for a riff extravaganza as you try to make it from unknown musician to mega rock 'n' roll star - if you succeed you get to play with the band themselves!

Terminator: Future Shock

(85: Recommended) VIE - Strategic Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

The third title in the *Terminator* series, this has plenty of action and atmosphere, as well as one of the best 3D engines around.

The 11th Hour

(67) Trilobyte/VIE - Adventure/Puzzle Game £TBC

The sequel to *The 7th Guest* has been a long time coming - unfortunately it wasn't really worth the wait. It's not really that different either, apart from the addition of a 'treasure hunt' challenge. But then if you really, really like puzzles you may find that this game is pretty playable.

The Hive

(78) Funsoft UK - Shoot 'Em Up £39.99

A pre-rendered blastathon which is a bit like *Rebel Assault*, only without the good bits.



(Left) *Theme Park*:
Sim City eat
your heart out.

« This Means War!

(89: Recommended) MicroProse – Strategy Wargame £44.99

Strategy, action and lots of futuristic stuff, a sort of *Command & Conquer* meets *Transport Tycoon*. It's slower C&C, but addictive once you've got to grips with all the options.

Virtua Fighter Remix

(89: Recommended) Sega/Datrotech – Beat 'Em Up £varies, bundled with Diamond Edge graphics card. Bloody stunning visuals with excellent detail on the players – but in the gameplay stakes it doesn't quite match up to *Mortal Kombat 3* or *Street Fighter II Turbo*.

Virtual Karts

(71) MicroProse – Arcade Racing Game £TBC. MicroProse have cleverly applied the word 'virtual' to the title – but don't ask why, 'cos the karts don't handle like karts and the hi-res graphics are jerk-tastic.

William Shatner's TekWar

(58) Capstone/US Gold – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99. What a pity, as this is just a *Doom* clone, and we reckon you could probably quite happily live without it... (Sorry Will!)

Wing Commander IV

(85: Recommended) Origin/Electronic Arts – Space Combat Sim £TBC

The filmed sequences apparently cost over eight million dollars – and it shows, as they really are very impressive. Unfortunately though, despite a genuinely interesting plot, strong storyline and the fact that *Wing Commander IV* is the most cinematic gaming experience you'll find, the gameplay's seriously lacking. You'll also need a mighty meaty PC to play it on.

Issue 36 – March 1996

Absolute Zero

(70) Domark – Space Shoot 'Em Up £39.99. Don't even consider this one unless your PC's got a serious amount of spare hard disk space – our reviewer found that it needed 20MB just to have the menu running at optimum performance! It's all a bit of a shame really, as this could have been an entertaining variation on the *Wing Commander/Elite* genre: it's got loads of ground-based missions, various different characters, some fairly complex mission objectives, swag spaceships, alien monsties, a big plot twist... but it's also got bland scenery and a pretty disappointing frame rate. To sum up, it's *Wing Commander* on the rocks.

Civilization 2

(90: Classic) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99. This is basically an enhanced version of the first game, but the combat's been tightened up and plenty of new units and advances have been added, as well as 'hit points' – even die-hard fans of the original will find that there's still a lot to learn. Of course the biggest difference is that *Civilization 2* is completely 3D – although moving up a perspective can make things cluttered and sometimes hard to follow at times, especially if you use the option to have multiple windows open at once. (NB: Windows 95 or 3.1 with WinG required.)

Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2

(60) Core Design – Helicopter Sim £TBC. The Sega CD helicopter blaster gets updated for the PC – although we're not really sure why they bothered. Although its got arcade-style controls it's even less realistic than most games of its type, and it's totally spoilt by a haphazard viewpoint – one minute the sky's empty, the next you've got something right in front of you. Even worse, targets that you lock onto can vanish from sight as you fire. This means you end up shooting from a stationary position, making you more vulnerable to attack and, basically, ruining the game.

Formula One Grand Prix 2

(95: Classic) MicroProse – Racing £44.99. Our reviewer called this an absolute masterpiece – even menu screens, sub-menus, pre-race options and set-up screens can keep you happily occupied for ages. If you want the options and textures in their full glory you'll

need a Pentium, but even in low-res it looks great. The attention to detail is amazing thanks to Geoff Crammond's perfectionism, and the physics of the game engine are outstanding – give up your social life now!

Police Quest: SWAT

(83: Recommended) Sierra – Adventure £49.99. Daryl Gates makes a welcome return with what has to be the best game in the *Police Quest* series. It's a different and enjoyable twist on the traditional adventure game – in fact, the only thing holding it back from a classic rating is a lack of compatibility with a light gun.

Rayman

(76) UbiSoft – Platform Game £TBC. From the Sony PlayStation come cutesy Disney-esque sprites, silky smooth parallax scrolling and colourful backgrounds with 68 levels; however, there aren't any that clever puzzles or particularly taxing levels, just nice graphics and a learning curve that veers from easy-peasy to annoying. Sorry *Rayman*, but despite the good presentation, you're ultimately a bit limited and pretty linear.

The Beast Within: Gabriel Knight 2

(88: Recommended) Sierra – Adventure Game £44.99

Admittedly *The Beast Within* isn't perhaps the most difficult game you'll ever play, but as an interactive movie it's brilliant. The acting is great, the FMV scenes contribute beautifully to the atmosphere and the plot gets increasingly complex and engrossing. Excellent!

Time Gate

(84: Recommended) Infogrames – Arcade Adventure £44.99

From the team that brought us *Alone In The Dark* comes something that looks like erm... *Alone In The Dark*, but set back in the days of the Knights Templar. However, there are some annoying inconsistencies, downright infuriating puzzles, items that are impossible to pick up, and it's easy to miss things, on top of that you'll find yourself saving furiously because you keep getting brutally killed when you least expect it. If you like *AITD*, you'll like this as it's almost exactly the same – which is why we haven't given it a higher score.

Warcraft 2: Tides of Darkness

(82: Recommended) Zlabac – Strategy £44.99. Despite a dodgy AI, *Warcraft 2* is very addictive and enjoyable – and it's even better still if you can take advantage of the multi-player option and play over a network. All in all, a definite 'must-buy' for anyone who liked the original.

Issue 37 – April 1996

Allied General

(83: Recommended)SSI/Mindscape – Wargame £44.99

The follow-up to the highly successful *Panzer General*. Not much different, although the interface has been enhanced and thanks to Windows you can have any resolution you like. The ground scale is a bit haphazard and varies too much from scenario to scenario, but on the whole *Allied General* should find favour not only with wargamers but with casual wargamers as well. Simplistic yes, but there's far more to this game than most of its genre. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Battleground Gettysburg

(87: Recommended) Empire Interactive – Strategy Wargame £39.99

The second in the *Battleground* series delivers an excellent feel for the Gettysburg battles (1-3 July 1863). What's more, the QuickTime movies really are a visual treat, the sound effects are excellent, and if you get stuck there's a comprehensive manual and a Quick Start guide. *Gettysburg* is well-produced and highly playable – hex-head wargamers will love it. But, you'll need 130MB hard disk space for full installation, or 60MB otherwise. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Big Red Racing

(87: Recommended) Domark – Racing Game £TBC. This is rather like a first-person perspective *Micro Machines*. It's brilliant fun, with 24

huge courses (including Mars, Venus, Moon and water) and there are loads of vehicles to choose from (snow ploughs, big foot monster trucks, Florida 'swampmaster' semi-amphibious propellor boat things...). You can even recreate *The Italian Job* bombing round Italy in a Mini!

Comix Zone

(68) Sega – Beat 'Em Up £29.99

Seriously tedious beat 'em up from Sega's newly-founded PC team in which you take on the role of a cartoonist trapped inside a comic book. Yawn, snore, etc.

Descent 2

(90: Classic) Interplay – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £TBC. Hardened *Descent* players will find adequate new perils to test them, but the game's well-paced enough for newbies. There are new weapons, monsties and great sound effects, plus 'Capture The Flag' team games where you can take sides and co-ordinate tactics to overcome your rivals. Overall it's a fun, involving and addictive game. If you loved the original, you'll be totally besotted with this one.

Ecco The Dolphin

(55) Sega – Arcade £29.99

The Mega Drive game from a few years ago. Unfortunately, even the pretty animation can't save it from being totally boring. Next!

Extreme Games

(70) Psygnosis – Sport £29.99

The PlayStation 'trendy sports' game involving mountain bikes, skateboards, in-line skates and street luges, but the PSX version has excellent graphics and the animation is much, much better – it's too slow on a P133 and even with the detail switched down it plods along, thus destroying any enjoyment factor it might have had.

Ian Botham International Cricket

(78) Beam Software – Sport £34.99

Surprisingly good simulation of one of the world's dullest sports. It's not as playable as the SNES version and has embarrassingly cheap and tacky FMV footage – essentially though it's playable and a good laugh.

NBA Live 96

(85: Recommended) Electronic Arts/EA Sports – Sport £44.99

It's basketball's turn for EA's Virtual stadium treatment, which means four different angles for each camera. It's fast, with intuitive controls, reasonably well-animated player sprites as well as being playable in both one- and two-player modes. The in-game graphics are a bit muted and it can be hard to follow the ball when the game gets crowded but it's very playable all the same. There are three levels of difficulty and an option to play exhibition games or a full game season, plus arcade, simulation and custom modes.

Resurrection: Rise 2

(73) Acclaim/Mirage – Beat 'Em Up £44.99

Far better than the original, but a long way from being a classic. It borrows from other established beat 'em ups: it's got *Street Fighter*'s projectile weapons, *Mortal Kombat*'s death moves and the super-combo moves of Nintendo's *Killer Instinct*. It appears to have everything – moves, hordes of characters and secret warriors, bonus levels – but it doesn't have the same addictive gameplay. When you kick and punch the blows don't 'connect', and what's the point of a beat 'em up where you don't feel that you're inflicting any grief?

Tempest 2000

(85: Recommended) Atari – Arcade £29.99

Atari's 15-year old game revamped with a kicking techno track. You have to defend your tunnel by shooting at the enemy craft trying to invade your space – but don't be deceived by the simplicity of it, it's not as easy as it sounds. Hours and hours of classic arcade fun.

Tomcat Alley

(34) Sega – Flight Simulation £29.99

Repetitive gameplay, dodgy graphics. Ugh!

Top Gun

(92: Classic) MicroProse – Flight Simulation £TBC. Excellent, apart from dodgy misleading views and a frame rate in hi-res which is only just acceptable on a P133. MicroProse have pulled

off what everyone else has been trying to do, which is to add a cinematic storyline to a flight sim. These bits blend together without being overlong, so that no momentum is lost. Atmosphere, with a capital 'A'.

Warhammer

(73) Mindscape – Strategy Wargame £TBC

Addictive, challenging real-time strategy with an interesting setting and strong plot. Once you're hooked you'll come back for more, even though it really is much too hard, the control system is too fiddly and chance plays too much of a role. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

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ATF

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £44.99

The US Navy *Fighters* engine gets seriously spruced up and then introduced to a large number of 'conceptual' aircraft. The plane's smooth flying is brilliant and the differences between the aircraft are more than noticeable. This is seriously good stuff for the propeller heads among you.

C&C: The Covert Operations

(84: Recommended) Virgin – Strategy £14.99

Argh! Spooze. Spooze...

If you've enjoyed fighting your way through the superb *Command & Conquer* you can now carry on – the mission disc is here! It's a must-have for any C&C fan, but be warned hat it's bloody hard!

Metaltech Earthsiege 2

(90: Classic) Sierra – 3D Shoot 'Em Up £44.99

Earthsiege is widely regarded as the best of all the big robot games – and the good news is that the sequel manages to live up to the reputation of its predecessor. It has better graphics, better sound effects and loads of new weapons. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Kingdom O'Magic

(82: Recommended) SCI – Adventure £44.99

More point-and-click fun, but this time with stereotypical gay hairdressers and women with huge boobs. It's actually quite funny at times.

Normality

(90: Classic) Gremlin Interactive – Adventure £TBC

Gremlin's ambitious and superb 3D point-and-click adventure just goes to show that you can muck around with genres and still come up with something new. It's may not be quite as funny as the likes of *Sam and Max* or *Discworld*, but it's certainly well worth having a look at.

PGA European Tour

(94: Classic) EA Sports – Sport £44.99

For all of you budding Nick Faldo and Ian Woosnam out there, test your swing with the greatest golf game in existence. It gets de-Yanked and tweaked a bit and is another classic from EA Sports.

Speed Haste

(79) Electronic Arts – Racing £29.99

Imagine a cross between *Virtual Racing* and *Daytona USA* that only costs 30 quid and doesn't look quite as good.

Spycraft

(91: Classic) Activision – Adventure £49.99

Activision have surprised us all with this one. It's basically a 'spy simulator', and if you've ever fancied getting your grubby mitts on spy satellites, decoding routines, image analysers and infra-red goggles, now's your chance. This has loads of FMV, loads of puzzles and has some of the most original features we've seen for a long time. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

S.T.O.R.M.

(70) Electronic Arts – Shoot 'Em Up £TBC

Nice graphics, traditional controls, but what happened to the gameplay? And er... this actually looks like *Scramble*, but with much prettier graphics.

Virtual Snooker

(60) Interplay – Sport £34.99

A year after *Virtual Pool*, we get the same game, except that this time around it's with snooker balls and loads and bloody loads of FMV of Steve 'intensely dull' Davis. A complete video of a 147 break, anyone? No?



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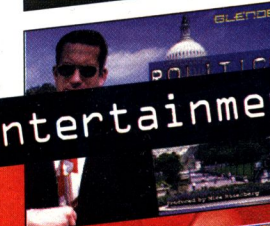
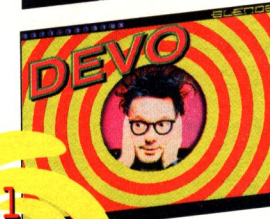
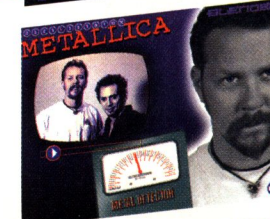
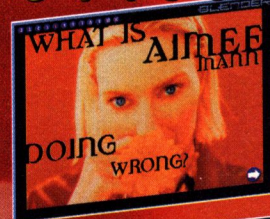


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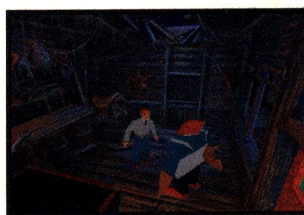


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(Right) *Alone in the Dark 3*: More Carnby, cobwebs, murder, mystery and mayhem.

(Far right) *Command & Conquer*: A case of Cannon Fodder meets *Dune 2*.



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Assault Rigs

(78) *Psygnosis - 3D Shoot 'Em Up* £34.99
Direct from the PlayStation, this is basically a 3D platform game in a tank: there are various gems to collect, complicated level layouts and a variety of minor puzzles. The controls are a little too complicated perhaps, but it plays well and is action-packed at times. There's also a network option for up to eight people. Well worth a look.

Azrael's Tear

(90: Classic) *Mindscape - Role-Playing Game* £44.99

An atmospheric blend of *Ultima Underworld* and *System Shock*, this is a worthy rival to the *Alone In The Dark* series.

Chronicles Of The Sword

(68) *Psygnosis - Adventure/Puzzle Game* £39.99
Although set in the time of King Arthur, you take on the lesser role of Gawain. Unfortunately, the storyline doesn't live up to the potential of the subject matter and although there are some well-crafted puzzles, they don't seem to fit into the gameplay very well. It looks good but it's just a bit too boring to keep our attention.

Conquest Of The New World

(75) *Interplay - Strategy ETBC*

The Yanks loved it, but we found it slow, cumbersome and lacking in excitement.

Star Trek: Deep Space 9 - Harbinger

(52) *Viacom - Adventure* £39.99

Unlike *A Final Unity*, this one doesn't quite reach warp speed. It's not as interactive as it should be - even die-hard Trekkers will fail to be swayed by it. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Fantasy General

(92: Classic) *SSI/Mindscape - Strategy Wargame* £44.99

The third in the *General* series uses the same basic combat and movement engine as *Panzer General* and *Allied General*. It's the most exciting strategy wargame of the year so far.

Fast Attack

(86: Recommended) *Sierra - Submarine Sim* £39.99

Ultra-complex but ultimately rewarding - newbies might find it a bit hard though. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Silent Thunder

(60) *Sierra - Flight Sim* £39.99

The follow-up to *A10 Tank Killer* - it looks amazing, but the fact that you're constrained to a very small geographic area, the game map is cluttered and unhelpful and the whole thing suffers from extreme jerky-vision makes it bloody annoying. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

TNN Bass Tournament

(80: Recommended) *Electronic Arts - Fishing Sim* £39.99

It's good, but not quite as good as *Trophy Bass* as it's more about amassing money than actually reeling the buggers in.

Terra Nova

(90: Classic) *Virgin Interactive - 3D Shoot 'Em Up* £39.99

Another robot title, this time from the people who brought you *System Shock* and *Flight Unlimited*. The graphics and sound effects could be better, but that aside, it's a very enjoyable jaunt.

Track Attack

(65) *MicroProse - Racing Game* £29.99

It sounds promising but fails to deliver the gameplay goods. It's slow even on a P75 and lack of control adds to the frustration.

Trophy Bass

(85: Recommended) *Sierra - Fishing Sim* £39.99

Near perfect, especially as you get to go fishing at any time of year with all the comforts of home. Smart!

Zork Nemesis

(65) *Activision - Adventure/Puzzle Game* £44.99

The music's very atmospheric and the graphics are absolutely stunning but you never come across any characters to interact with, which makes wandering about puzzle-solving tedious and boring. However, if you're a fan of *Myst* and *The 11th Hour* it's quite likely that *Nemesis* will appeal. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

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Afterlife

(88: Recommended) *Virgin/LucasArts - God Sim* £44.99
This 'concept' god sim shapes up very well against the inevitable comparisons to *Sim City* and *Civilization*, except here you do actually play God, sending lost souls to either Heaven or Hell and looking after their needs by building appropriate 'zones'. Long-term playability.

AH-64D Longbow

(90: Classic) *Electronic Arts - Helicopter Flight Simulation* £44.99

Longbow is justifiably a classic and will appeal most to fans of *US Navy Fighters* and *Top Gun* (prop-heads skip to *Hind* below). It seems to have been designed first and foremost as a game, rather than sticking to realism à la *Hind*; it's pretty, with superb music and a gorgeous interface - but there's no network play and it requires 97MB hard disk space.

Battle Arena Toshinden

(83: Recommended) *FunSoft - Beat 'Em Up* £34.99
Warning - this PSX conversion is processor-hungry! True to the original, this is more of a sword and sorcery beat 'em up as opposed to pure fisticuffs - even the 'unarmed' combatants seem to carry the most alarming weapons; a bit of simple hand-to-hand violence wouldn't go amiss. It's got serious competition in the form of *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter* - although it doesn't require a 3D accelerator card.

Duke Nukem 3D

(93: Classic) *US Gold - Shoot 'Em Up* £44.99

Yup, *Duke* is a *Doom* clone but it's more inventive and more entertaining than we could have hoped. It's also a bloody good stopgap while we're waiting for the mighty *Quake*. *Duke* himself is blessed with a great sense of humour, there are new weapons and enemies, a level designer and the facility to convert any *Doom* WAD into a *Duke* map. Excellent value for money!

Gearheads

(90: Classic) *Philips Media - Arcade* £29.99

Don't knock it 'til you've tried it - okay, so it's about clockwork toys battling for supremacy but it's surprisingly addictive nonetheless. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Hind

(90: Classic) *Digital Integration - Flight Sim* £44.99

Propeller heads and fans of *SU-27* and *Tornado* will absolutely lurve this one. The emphasis is on hyper-realism rather than presentation, so it runs great on low spec machines. Newbies be warned - it's so bloody hard you might be better off with *Longbow*. It scores over *Longbow* in that it has loads of multi-play options (direct serial link, two-player over a modem or a network). Prop-heads persevere - it's well worth taking time to master it.

Silent Hunter

(90: Classic) *SSI/Mindscape - Submarine Sim* £39.99

This does what it sets out to do, and does it perfectly. *Silent Hunter* is hard to fault - it's got superlative atmosphere and graphics, loads of cat-and-mouse stuff, explosions, big splashes, creaking hulls, depth charge attacks, leaking engine rooms - the wwtz works, in fact!

Space Hulk: Vengeance Of The Blood Angels

(90: Classic) *Electronic Arts - Strategic Shoot 'Em Up* £49.99

It's so tough it just about screams "Come on if you think you're 'ard enough!" The tense foreboding atmosphere and new graphics, sounds and 3D engine combine to make sure this offers a long-term challenge to those brave enough to accept it.

TacOps

(81: Recommended) *Strategic Plus Software - Strategy Wargame* £44.99

Don't be fooled by the basic graphics, *TacOps* is a high quality real-time game - with no hexes! Plenty of excitement and endless tactical possibilities make this a must-have. Includes network and play by mail/e-mail options.

Witchaven 2

(72) *US Gold - 3D Shoot 'Em Up* £29.99

Despite having all the elements of quality gaming (superb graphics, spooky sound, fast hectic action and loads of atmosphere) this is more like an add-on disk for the original, and doesn't quite do enough to better its rivals.

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Cyberia 2

(80: Recommended) *Virgin - Arcade Shoot 'Em Up* £44.99

If you're a fan of the first game and also loved *Rebel Assault 2*, then this title will be worth both your time and money. Just to vary from the gaming norm, your quest is to save the world; you're offered longer arcade sections here than in the original *Cyberia* but sadly the crap adventure bits are still here.

CyberJudas

(80: Recommended) *Empire - Political Simulation* £39.99

Cast as the President of the USA, you have at your disposal an interface that allows you to access every country in the world. Set up trade agreements, negotiate peace settlements, or try to track down the traitors in your midst. If you're in the slightest bit interested in politics, then you're likely to find this title intriguing. Otherwise it'll send you straight to snore city.

Euro 96

(70) *Gremlin Interactive - Sport Sim* £29.99

This eagerly awaited sequel to the fab *Actua Soccer* sadly disappoints because more attention seems to have been lavished on superficial graphical touches than on improving the basic gameplay. Essentially, this could have got away with being a data disk, but as the full blown product it's packed with too many fouls to make the grade.

Fire Fight

(65) *Electronic Arts - Shoot 'Em Up* £29.99

Reminiscent of that old pub favourite *Asteroids*, *Fire Fight* has you controlling a little rotatory ship and homing in on marauding aliens. Trouble is the action's samey and slightly jerky, and made all the more confusing due to the pseudo 3D graphics.

Indiana Jones And His Desktop Adventures

(80: Recommended) *LucasArts (VIE) - Adventure* £29.99

Packed with puzzles, weapons and Nazis, it's the ideal game for the office, though your P45 may be winging its way to your door sooner than you think.

Pray For Death

(70) *Virgin Interactive - Beat 'Em Up* £29.99

This run-of-the-mill beat 'em up plays host to the usual grand tournament brimming with unsavoury combatants and contorted death throes. It's essentially an inferior version of *Mortal Kombat* with corpses and demons, so if it's stunning beat 'em up action you're after, you'd be best advised to look elsewhere.

Settlers 2

(92: Classic) *Blue Byte - God Sim* £39.99

The sequel to the fab *Settlers* boasts a whole range of improvements including a new interface and far more varied gameplay. Frighteningly addictive.

Shellshock

(60) *Eidos Interactive/Core Design - Tank Sim* £39.99

A tank sim of the more arcadey kind. But the missions are dull, the scenery looks pixelly and though it may have a network option, why bother with something this tedious?

The Gene Machine

(87: Recommended) *Vic Tokai - Adventure* £29.99

If you're a fan of *LucasArts* adventures, then check this out. It offers an inventive jaunt packed with lovely graphics and genuinely funny British humour, though adventure supremos may find it a tad on the easy side.

The Muppet CD-ROM

(87: Recommended) *Starwave/Ocean - Arcade* £29.99

Hilarious Muppet outing featuring the popular puppets in seven averagish arcade/puzzle games made brilliant by the excellent jokes. And the intro sequence just has to be seen to be believed. Superb fun.

Total Mania

(68) *Eidos Interactive/Domark - Arcade* £39.99

A sort of cross between the *X-COM* series and *Crusader*. Packed with cyborgs, weapons, svga graphics and an impressive zoom function, it's let down by poor AI and dull gameplay.

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Baku Baku Animal

(90: Classic) *Sega PC - Puzzle Game* £29.99

The coolest puzzle game around! *Tetris* or *Puyo Puyo*-style play has you matching up cutesy animals and their food to clear the screen. Great fun single-player, with a fab two-player single-screen option and a kicking soundtrack, it's more addictive than coca-cola. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Broken Sword

(84: Recommended) *Virgin - Adventure Game* £44.99

"Interactive cartoon" from the *Beneath A Steel Sky* team. Gameplay tends toward lengthy conversations thanks to an icon-based speech interface which doesn't allow you to phrase questions yourself. Gorgeous scenery, and well worth a look - more than a match for many of the FMV interactive movies around.

Battleground: Waterloo

(74) *Empire Interactive - Strategy Wargame* £39.99

The third in the *Battleground* series and still no scenario editor! But it looks brilliant and will appeal to any wargame buff - just shrug your shoulders at some of the sillier combat scenes and enjoy! (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Final Doom

(62) *GT Interactive - 3D Shoot 'Em Up* £29.99

The levels are quite good, it sports hi-res and Internet play, and it runs under Windows 95. But really, who cares?

Harvester

(83: Recommended) *Virgin - Adventure Game* £34.99

Despite loads of FMV, *Harvester* provides plenty of traditional, old-fashioned adventure gameplay. It's a bit gore-tastic, and the politically correct may object to voyeuristic shots of a chick in suspenders and undies; those who don't care either way will find proper puzzles, an involving plot, and interesting sub-plots.

Monty Python And The Holy Grail

(69) *7th Level - Puzzle* £39.99

Mildly diverting, if over-familiar, puzzle-based interactive picture book of the film. Sort of. (NB: Windows 95 required.)

Team F1

(88: Recommended) *Electronic Arts - Formula One Simulation* £39.99

Even more comprehensive than *FIGP Manager*. Starting from scratch, you take charge of everything from bank loans, R&D, sponsors, wind tunnel and engine testing, to office expansion, manufacturing contracts and even industrial espionage. A bit fiddly and confusing, especially as it's played against the clock, but worth the slog.

Time Commando

(86: Recommended) *Electronic Arts - Beat 'Em Up* £44.99

Classy-looking rendered beat/hack/stab/shoot 'em up with nice backgrounds and lots of walking-about bits, in which you get whisked to different eras in time to find something that may or may not be some kind of weird computer virus thing. We may never know.

Virtua Fighter PC

(79) *Sega PC - Beat 'Em Up* £29.99

No 3D accelerator card required - and it shows. It's s-l-o-w, but pretty close to the arcade version. If you don't have a game of this genre, at £30 it's worth considering.

Z

(92: Classic) *Time Warner Interactive - Strategic Shoot 'Em Up* £29.99

Addictive *Command & Conquer*-style game, based on occupation of zoned areas to control weapon-producing factories. As a result, it's more strategic than *C&C*, and lacks the exploration aspect - you see the whole, arena-like level from the start. Network options, entertaining cut-scenes and soldiers who criticise your efforts - which they will, because it's very, very hard - the seemingly meagre 20 levels will take you an age to finish. Z



Guess what everyone's still talking about? This one's going to run and run...

QUAKE vs DUKE... THE MEGA SNORATHON

I've now got *Duke* and *Quake* shareware and I reckon *Duke* is miles better. *Quake* is probably the best thing since chain-saws for all the Mr Network-Pentiums, but for us Mr Humble-486s it ain't that good. *Quake*'s main selling point is its multi-player aspect, and its single-player game isn't that great, whereas *Duke*'s single-player mode is fantastic.

Something like *Quake* which is similar to *Doom* will never have the same impact; that will only happen when another completely original game is released.

Martin 100635,2734@compuserve.com

True, Quake was never designed for 486s... but, like many games it's something that's pushing the technology as far as possible.

...AND AGAIN

Hello. Got *Quake* shareware. Got *Duke 3D* full game. Shareware *Duke 3D* backed up. Re-installed it. Compared them. When will you stop wanking over *Quake* and realise that it's cows' BSE-ridden brains? *Duke 3D* is the dog's dangly bits. And I'm fed up with you saying, "*Quake* is for men". Fuck off! Are you calling ME a woman? Pish. From a disgruntled MAN.

Steven Stevens, 101677,1202

Are we calling you a woman? Well... er, yes. Obviously. Dork.

OOH... AND AGAIN

Well, I got my hands on the shareware version of *Quake* and having reached the end of it I have to say that I disagree with the majority of previews and news reports. When I played *Doom* I was entranced - it had the same effect as when I first played *Dungeon Master*, *Lemmings* and *Elite*. *Doom* was a new experience. Since then I've watched the development of games that took

the original game system and tried to improve upon it, and in my opinion the system had reached saturation point at about the time of *Doom 2*.

Now *Quake*'s arrived and from the way the magazines are using hyperbole and the frenzy of postings in Internet areas, you'd think Christ was about to appear before us all. Don't get me wrong, I think *Quake* will sell by the cart-load and I'm sure people will praise it to the roof, but are we not seeing hype over content? And this feeding frenzy can only lead to a disappointed public which will be expecting far too much. Considering the long wait from a company that can produce so much, *Quake* is a shallow next-step for PC games.

Paul Barnett, terris1995@aol.com

Why is it a shallow step? True, Quake has been subject to more hyperbole than any other game in history (probably), but nothing can live up to this degree of hype and it's not fair to knock it just because it hasn't.

GUESS WHAT? AGAIN

I've been playing your *Quake* demo since I got August's *Zone*, and it's the best! I know you're thinking, "Oh piss off, not another *Quake* is better than *Duke*, or vice versa letter." Well, *Quake*'s wicked, and *Duke*'s brilliant too, but in some respects they're better than each other. I still think *Doom* is the boss - the new engines are all brilliant, but *Doom* is the simplest and has none of this looking, aiming up and down, flying and swimming around massive levels never finding each other because *Quake* is swimming underwater crap.

Also, *Duke* and *Quake* are both set in different periods and have different weapons etc - so if you like blowing up cities you'll love *Duke*, and if you like that wandering around the castle with

Write to PC Zone

There are numerous ways to transmit your delightful scrawlings to *PC Zone*. You can either use the traditional method, oft-described as 'snail-mail' by the pretentious technocrats of this world...

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period lighting stuff you'll love *Quake*. So why bother comparing? One may sell better than the other, but that doesn't mean it's a better game, does it?

Oh yeah... On your July cover disc there was a brilliant demo of *Gender Wars*. I played it, loved it - until it died. Is it my rubbish machine (the only one out of two with a CD-ROM) 486DX 33MHZ 8MB RAM 2MB video card, or my CONFIG.SYS/AUTOEXEC.BAT, or a bug in the demo? I couldn't figure out what things I needed in my AUTOEXEC etc as I couldn't find a README.TXT or similar. What specifications do I need (eg DX2 minimum, files=40 buffers=20, or a patch)? Keep up the brilliant work.

Paul Cannon aka Pacman (from the British Doom 2 League, run by Maddog aka Steve Roper), 100430.740@compuserve.com

Whoah there! Jeez, I wait and I wait for a letter that actually praises Quake and it ends up coming from someone who's quite clearly mentally unstable and has absolutely no concept of punctuation. Well, we did our best to translate it into English. Brilliant.

(Below) Sorry, Steven Stevens, we still reckon that *Quake* is for men...

(Right) ...and that *Duke 3D* is for girls. Still, at least we resisted the temptation to take the piss out of your name.





...AND AGAIN

In your August issue there was a letter entitled 'Duke vs Quake snorathon'. At the end you asked for people's views after they'd played the Quake shareware. I've now played both the Duke and the Quake shareware editions and I have to say that Quake wins hands down in many areas. Although Duke is definitely more action-packed/fun, Quake has a far better atmosphere and structure. It's also got a fairer difficulty setting, as I think Duke is unfairly hard. Duke has better weapons but Quake is better overall. I hope to get the full versions of both games soon as I think both are great, but from the shareware versions I don't think Duke has a chance.

What was that Darth guy going on about? I don't see how you can compare a pre-alpha test version of Quake with the full version of Duke Nukem 3D. It's like comparing the demo of Virtua Fighter Remix with Virtua Fighter 3.

Vivian Lunny, 100306,406

Hooray! Somebody with their brain plugged in. Let's hope this will set a trend for the rest of the letters page...

...AND FINALLY

Congrats on getting the Quake demo out in the shops within two weeks of its release – a great effort. Unfortunately, like many sad bastards I'd downloaded it from an FTP site within hours of its release so I didn't benefit – serves me right. I should point out that as yet I've only played it in single-player mode; I don't have access to a network and though I play Doom, Duke and C&C regularly via modem, I haven't had the chance to try Quake. I've gone right through it now and played about with different video settings to get the best out of it, but overall I'm disappointed.



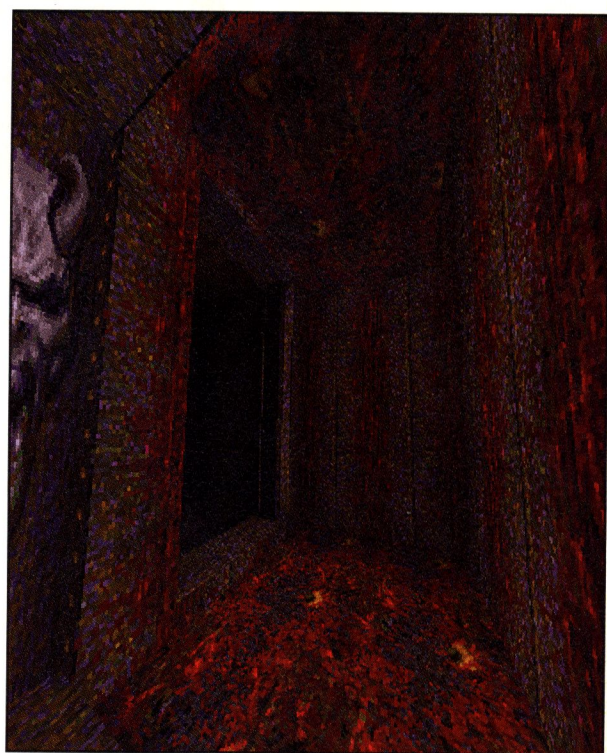
The graphics engine is very impressive indeed, especially the way in which the architecture can be layered so you can look down and see two or three levels below; I'm impressed too that you can look straight up and down. There's also a fair amount of creepy atmosphere, the underwater bits are pretty good and the zero-G level was quite fun.

But the colour palette is just too limited. Things really are awfully drab – the monsters look reasonable close-up, but from a distance they just resemble amorphous blobs. Not only that, but they move slowly, appear to have no AI at all (compared to Descent 2) and if everything is supposed to be so realistic, why do the ogres fall over in slow motion when you shoot them?

The levels are quite small but still seem empty – I know the Duke engine is very different, but how about a few medieval tables or chairs to give a more believable feel? I'd also have liked to see some interaction with the environment. I'm not convinced about this mishmash of styles – the Slipgate plot is the weakest I've come across since 'Bobby's dream' in Dallas and ogres with chain-saws are just too bizarre for my liking.

All this would be less important if Quake was offering something new in terms of single-player gameplay, but it isn't – it really is formula Doom, with less to interest the single player than alternatives such as Descent 2 or Duke. The weapons are almost identical, although rather less well drawn.

However, what's really unforgivable is the menu system: a couple of sparse control menus and the rest left to a command prompt interface circa 1984. I've used dBase 3's dot prompt in the past but I wonder how the Windows 95 generation is going to react to this?



(Above and below left) Quake: We asked for feedback on the Quake vs Duke debate... at least the fact that most of it arrived via e-mail saved the postman from a double hernia.

(Above left and below) Duke 3D goes Dallas?

And the modem support is laughable – I couldn't work it out at all and have waited for a few FAQs to appear before trying it. As far as I can see you have to use the control menu, go to the console and manually enable the comm port before returning to the control menu to start the game. Even if this works (and I'll let you know), from what I've read it seems that head-to-head modem play is always going to be unsatisfactory because of the client-server system – one person is always at a disadvantage.

I thought your Quake 'review' was so sycophantic that you must now be as brown as iD's colour palette. Whatever happened to editorial integrity? Judging by your recent comments and those I've seen on CompuServe, Quake is a different kettle of fish when played on a network with a dedicated server. This may well be true, but I suspect that few readers have access to one. Whether dedicated dial-in servers become a reality remains to be seen. Who knows, maybe Wireplay might work properly one day (I've been testing that too).

Quake has taken a helluva slagging on cns over the last few weeks and I hope that iD have a rethink and delay its release. If they don't and the registered »



(Right and below) So F1GP2 is with us at last – but network play isn't. Doh!



release turns out much like this, I hope you give it two scores when you review it properly – one for single and modem players and one for network play.

Michael A Palmer, 70374,3512

So jumping up and down about a game that we feel is genuinely one of the most important products the PC has ever seen is sycophantic? Okay, so you feel differently to us about the game itself, but one of the reasons we've been backing Quake all the way is because it's a product that's going to lift PC gaming out of the geeky quagmire that it currently resides in as far as the rest of the world goes. PC gaming still gets a pretty bad rap, and while Doom managed to give some semblance of 'cool' to our little section of the entertainment industry, Quake is a product that's going to help us all be taken a lot more seriously. This is partly to do with the hype, partly to do with the pedigree and partly to do with the game itself. What other game has managed to generate such media interest? Just look... the 'real world' wants to know about this thing. Isn't this a good thing? Sure we've gone nuts over Quake, but that's because we believe in it and what it represents.

If you feel that we are unduly sycophantic, then it has to be said that you are unduly pessimistic about the future of gaming. Do you honestly feel that the gaming community is going to stagnate? Sure, not many people have access to on-line gaming – but it's only taking off now. A year ago, not everyone had access to a Pentium-based PC, but they're now considered the norm. Games will always push back the frontiers of technology and will always be pushing for new ideas to be accepted. I admit we're still lagging a bit on the comms side, but with all the investment going into on-line, dial-in servers we can't fail to have a decent system up and running in the next 12 months. I'm sure that Wireplay will play an important role, but then so will many other independent server systems.

The proliferation of dial-in gaming is hampered as much by a lack of knowledge on the consumer side as it is by technology and costing. As soon as a system arrives that allows you to dial in and play multi-player Quake without really having to know the

intricacies of TCP/IP or whatever, then the whole market will explode. Face it – it's going to happen, and if nothing else, Quake is going to be partly responsible for speeding this process up – it's a catalyst, and that can only be a good thing.

AHH... A REFRESHING CHANGE. WINDOWS 95

Could you please tell all those sad bastards who can't run Windows 95 to sod off! They obviously don't have a clue how to use their configuration files properly. I have 625K of conventional memory with CD-ROM and mouse drivers loaded. And for all those folk who can't play Quake under Windows, why the fuck don't they just shut down into DOS mode, and save everyone reading their monotonous drivel.

Stuart Hall, 106133,471

F1GP2 IS HERE!

Well, it's out.. No, not that! F1GP2 ...and was it worth the wait? Hmm. I've got a DX4/100, 16MB of RAM, 265K cache, Trident 9440 PCI graphics card, DOS 6.2 and it's like watching a bloody slide show. Now I know I haven't got a ninja PC but surely it's able to move graphics at quite a pace and I'm talking about VGA at least! In SVGA mode it's like walking round the Tate Gallery and paying £4.00 for a cup of coffee...

I don't know what held back the game's release, but it certainly wasn't

speed optimisation. Oh, and I can't bloody qualify on any circuit with anything resembling corners. Why should I have to set the car up? That's what mechanics are for. You don't see Damon Hill with his sleeves rolled up changing tyres! Maybe I'm just crap, or want things too easy.

It's still the best racing simulator available and at £32.99 good value, but if you've got a DX2/66 and only 4MB, save your money and go and see real pictures in London.

Daniel Cook, 106206,1711

To be fair though, you have to admit that it's a bloody fine game and you don't actually have to do all of the setting up if you don't want to.

OOH... AND AGAIN

I've finally received F1GP2 and the first thing I checked was network support. And guess what? There isn't any! What happened to all the promises of multi-player games over networks (PC Zone 30, September 95)? One of my mates wrote to MicroProse back in August '95 and they themselves promised network support. What the hell are they up to? Null-modem? More like nil-points!

Andrew Stewart, 101777,3607

It seems that network support never made it in, and to be honest the null-modem support isn't exactly gobsmacking. So what can we do? Well, we could try and hassle MicroProse for a patch. It might work. **Z**



Culky Says

IT'S OFFICIAL!... All women are MAD!



DEAR ENGLAND, Alright? Culky here isn't it. Well, since I've been inside I've had time to look at the results of 'Culky's Critical Questionnaire'. And take it from me, the results that have come in so far are just as I predicted... they clearly show that all women are, in actual fact, **MAD**!

But you don't have to take my words for it and that, just cast your eyes over to the right and get a good hard saw of the completely random replies I got back from the readers. I've bunged in a copy of the questionnaire so you can see I ain't riggin' nofink.

CULKY'S CRITICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

(The BIG Official One)

Attach your photo here

Name
Address

Please answer all of the following questions (tick box)

1) Do you reckon that all women are **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

2) Is your missus **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

3) Women watch tv because...
a) They are interested in current affairs ☐
b) They like to watch sloppy films ☐
c) It keeps their eyes in a straight line, so they look less **MAD** ☐

4) Is your sister **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

5) If you had a sister, would she be **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

6) Is your mum **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

7) If you ever have a mum, will she be **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

8) Married couples want sons because...
a) They can earn a lot more money ☐
b) They can ride fast motorbikes ☐
c) They don't want any more **MADNESS** in the family ☐

9) Is your gran **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

10) Your mum puts curlers in her hair to...
a) Make it go curly ☐
b) Make her 'go' faster ☐
c) Make her less **MAD** ☐

11) Have you ever met a woman who isn't **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

12) Women go to work...
a) To help support the family ☐
b) To be near men ☐
c) To appear less **MAD** ☐

13) Women go into hospital to...
a) Have babies ☐
b) Have plastic surgery ☐
c) To have doctors make their brains less **MAD** ☐

14) When your girlfriend is over-long in the bathroom, is she...
a) Over-cleaning her bits and bobs ☐
b) Getting engine oil out of her toes ☐
c) Washing her mind to make it less **MAD** ☐

15) Have you ever said to yourself "God... she's **MAD**"? YES ☐ NO ☐

16) Women laugh...
a) When they hear a good joke ☐
b) Because they find some aspect of life amusing ☐
c) Because they're **MAD** ☐

17) What one word would you say best describes women?
a) Clever ☐
b) Very clever ☐
c) **MAD** ☐

18) Women love fruit because...
a) It's healthy ☐
b) Fruit is good for the skin ☐
c) Vitamin C in most fruits stabilises the seratin level in the brain which stops them going even more **MAD** ☐

19) Women paint their eyes funny colours to...
a) Attract wildlife ☐
b) Cover crevices or wrinkles ☐
c) To make them look nicer, which is in actual fact a **MAD** idea ☐

20) If you ever have a great granddaughter, will she be **MAD**? YES ☐ NO ☐

For a tie-breaker (but bearing in mind this isn't a compo) please write and tell me anything else I might find interesting about women.

Cut out complete and send to CULKY.

1 Terry, a fireman, says his missus is **MAD** as she don't like him drinking every night with his mates Steve, Kevin, Paul and Dave. "She's **MAD** I reckon," he told his mates as she dragged him out of the pub at midnight last Monday, "completely bloody **MAD**!"



2 Steve, a fireman, says his wife is **MAD** as she doesn't like him getting drunk with his mates Terry, Kevin, Paul and Dave. "I'm locking her up if she come down the boozier like what she done on Tuesday night, in front of my mates and that. She's a nutta, completely **MAD**!"



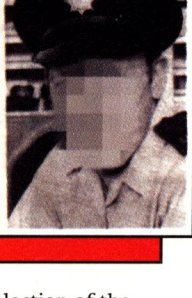
3 Kevin, a fireman and a long-term drinking pal of Terry, Steve, Paul and Dave, tells us of the time he was in the pub and had just fed most of his wages into a fruit machine, when his missus come down there. "She actually hit me in the gob! I couldn't believe it, that's like calling me a poof in front of this lot! She's **MAD**!"



4 Paul Stevens, or Paul 'The Pro' Stevens, a fireman, has a few more good years' hard drinking under his hat, and he says he's got through at least four **MAD** women in his time. "They're all **MAD**, take it from 'The Pro'," he boasts. "I know, I've had four of 'em, nutters the lot, I reckon."



5 Dave 'The Chin' Sniper, a fireman. "I know we have a reputation for putting out fires and that, but the real fires are them women, they burn like magnesium, I've never seen anything as **MAD** as a woman, although I don't actually know any."



This is just a small selection of the replies Culky's had from the readers, If you know anyone who thinks women are **MAD** let me know, or fill in the questionnaire and send it in!

Cheers! Colin. Z



Mr Cursor

He's afraid of... Flow charts

I RECEIVED a letter recently which said the following: "Dear Mr Cursor, If I wanted to know about ice-cream vans I'd buy an ice-cream van magazine, and if I wanted to know about cockroaches I'd buy a cockroach magazine. But I don't. I buy PC Zone because it's a computer magazine, so please talk about computers for once in your life."

What a git. Still, maybe he's got a point, which is why, this month, Mr Cursor is a 'flow chart special'. (And you can't get much more computery than a flow chart, let's face it.)



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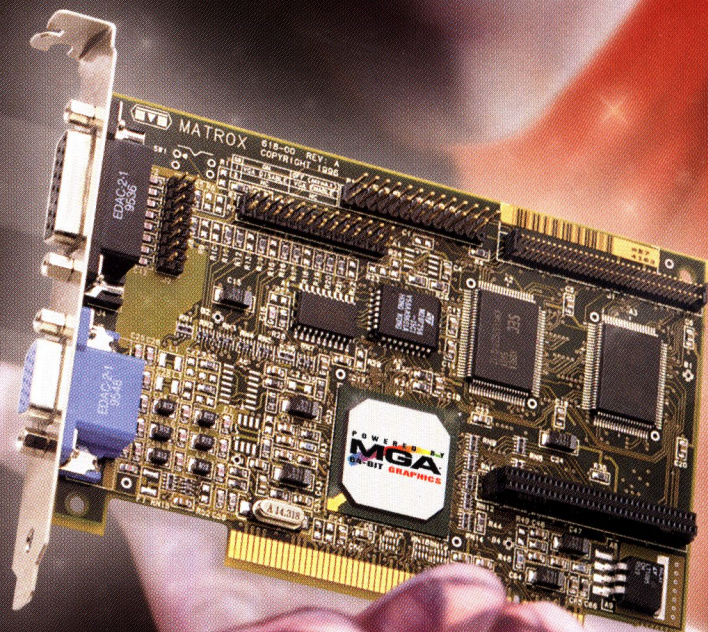
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